CAB
121
CAB/121/127
W
1323

A/Policy/Mid East/2.

127

Archive Foundation

A/Policy/Mid East/2.

Policy in the Middle East & Mediterranean [Post Torch]

From: 20 - 9 - 1942.
To: 10 - 4 - 1943.

FILE NO: A/POLICY/MIDEAST/2.

TITLE: POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND MEDITERRANEAN (POST "TORCH").

(Note: "TORCH" stands for North African operations see E/NORTH AFRICA/ series)

FROM: 20th September, 1942.

TO: 10th April, 1943.

Subjects covered

EXPLOITATION OF OPERATION "TORCH".

EXTENSION OF MEDITERRANEAN "SINK AT SIGHT" ZONE TO COVER ALL WESTERN BASIN EXCEPT SPANISH TERRITORIAL WATERS.

FUTURE STRATEGY AND PLANNING (Note by the Prime Minister dated 17th November, 1942).

AIR OPERATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN (see also A/POLICY/AIR/2 - BOMBING POLICY IN MIDDLE EAST).

NORTH AFRICA AND LEVANT: REQUIREMENTS FOR SECURITY.

ALLIED STRATEGY - MEMORANDUM BY GENERAL SIKORSKI.

DEVELOPMENT OF AIRFIELDS IN NORTH AFRICA.

OPERATIONS IN EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN.

CLOSED SEE A/POL/MIDEAST/3

132

MOST SECRET
CIPHER TELEGRAM

S.I.C. FILE

This Message will not be distributed outside British or U.S. Government departments or Headquarters or re-transmitted even in cipher without being paraphrased.

[redacted]

From :- The War Office.

To :- C. in C. Middle East.

S.D.2.5221
Desp. 2000. 10 Apr. 43.

MOST SECRET - IMMEDIATE.

69063 Cipher(SD2) 10 Apr.

BIGOT. Your SD/31140 5 Apr. - 131

[redacted] Covering approval given appts para FIRST (A) your SD/27446 28 Mar and GSOI your CS/2016 31 Mar.

TWO. 129 Personnel your CS/2016 leaving earliest possible but emphasise difficulty competing priorities.

C.6. (Telegrams)

T.O.O.1522B/10.

Copies to:-

D.M.O.
D.M.T.
D.S.D.
D.M.S.(A)
D.D.M.O.(O)
D.Plans.
D.D.M.T.(A)
D.D.S.D.(O)
[redacted]

D.F.(a).
D.D. of O.(C).
Brig. A.G.Co-ord.
Brig. Q.(Ops).
M.O.1, 4, 5.
G.S.(P).
M.T.6. (C.O.)
D.D.S.D.

S.D.2(ten)5, 5.
A.G.1.
Q.(Ops) 1, 4.
Comb. Ops H.Q.
Brig.Jacob.
Foreign Office
(G.L.Clutton,Esq)
Head of War Registry
(Admiralty).
A.M.D.S.(c)(Air Ministry)

131

S.I.C. FILE

MOST SECRET
CIPHER TELEGRAM

324146
5221

This Message will not be distributed outside British or U.S. Government departments or Headquarters or re-transmitted even in cipher without being paraphrased.

From :- C. in C. Middle East. Recd 0400. 6 Apr.43.

To :- The War Office.

IMMEDIATE.

SD/31140 cipher. 5 Apr. MOST SECRET.

130

Your 66804 (S.D.2b) 3 Apr.

Officer only.

BIGOT.

One. Your one. We did not infer the implicatio. you have construed on paras four and five of our G(P)18102 of 7 Mar. Standard WE of a Corps HQ does not provide suffi cient senior staff offrs A for comprehensive detailed and specialist planning now being undertaken by HQ 3 Corps in addition to normal Adm and supervision of trg (repeat Trg) of formations to be placed under their Comd. B In view of distance between planning staff in Cairo and remainder of HQ in Syria. Appts requested my SD/27446 of 28 Mar 129 very carefully examined before submission to you and considered essential. Work of planning staff being delayed without them. Request approval earliest.

Two. Your two. Confirmed.

Three. Your three. Trg team my WS/2016 of 31 Mar is requiredto meet new commitments and is not (Rpt NOT) part of enlarged CTC referred your 62734 (SD2) of 21 Mar our comments of which were cabled in SD/26669 of 26 Mar.

Four. Your five.

Four. Your five. In view para three above request despatch of personnel my CS/2016 may be arranged earliest as essential they arrive ME not (Rpt NOT) later than 10 Apr.

Five. Your six. Confirmed Col Trg is required. My SD/26669of 26 Mar and para three above refer.

Six. Your seven. Noted but reference to your 62734 (S.D.2) in your paras three and six not (Rpt NOT) understood in view your receipt my SD/26669 of 26 Mar which was framed to make clear the system we are working on and which we wish to retain and expand as required.

T.O.O.1855.C.

C.6 (Telegrams).

To: S.D.2. (for action)

Copies to: D.M.O.
D.M.T.
D.S.D.
D.M.S.(A)
D.D.H.O.(O)
D.Plans.
D.D.M.T.(A)
D.D.S.D.(O)
D.F.(A)
D.D. of O.(C)
Brig A.G.Co-ord.
Brig Q.(Ops)
M.O.1. 4. 5.
G.S.(P)
M.T.6.(C.O.)
D.D.S.D.
S.D.2.(ten copies) 3.5.
A.G.1.
Q.(Ops)1.4.
Combined Ops H.Q.
Brig Jacob
Foreign Office (C.L.Clutton Esq.)
Head of War Registry(Admiralty)
A.M.O.S. (Air Ministry)

S.I.C. FILE 130

MOST SECRET
CIPHER TELEGRAM

S.D.2. 5221.

From:- The War Office.

To:- C. in C. Middle East. Desp. 0330 4 Apr. 43.

This Message will not be distributed outside British or U.S. Government departments or Headquarters or re-transmitted even in cipher without being paraphrased.

Cipher S.D.2(b) 3 Apr.

MOST SECRET - IMMEDIATE. - 129

Your SD/27446 of 28 Mar and CS/2016 of 31 Mar.

ONE. In view HQ 3 Corps complete now made available you consider planning staff should be found from within Corps HQ WE. This implied paras four and five your G(P) 18102 7 Mar. Request you reconsider necessity for increment.

TWO. Is Col Trg your CS/2016 same appt mentioned your SD/27446.

THREE. Is Trg Team your CS/2016 part of enlarged C.T.C. referred our 62734 21 Mar.

FOUR. Request immediate reply above.

FIVE. Provisionally personnel your CS/2016 being nominated but essential you clarify situation in order Troopers consider approval appts beyond delegated powers.

SIX. Is Col Trg your CS/2016 necessary in view prospective WE for CTC referred our 62734.

SEVEN. Separate reply follows ref your SD/26669 of 26 Mar. T.O.O. 1911A/3.

Copies to:-
D.M.O.
D.M.T.
D.S.D.
D.M.S.(A).
D.D.M.O.(O).
D. Plans.
D.D.M.T.(A).
D.D.S.D.(O).
D.F.(a).
D.D. of O. (C).
Brig A.G. Co-ord.
Brig. Q(Ops).
M.O. 1, 4, 5.
G.S.(P).
M.T. 6.(C.O.)
D.D.S.D.
S.D. 2(ten copies). 3, 5.
A.G. 1.
Q(Ops). 1, 4.
Combined Ops. H.Q.
Brig. Jacob.
Foreign Office (G.L. Clutton).
Head of War Registry (Admiralty).
A.M.C.S.(C) Air Ministry.

C.6.(Tels).

S.I.C. FILE 129

MOST SECRET
CIPHER TELEGRAM

321703

This Message will not be distributed outside British or U.S. Government departments or Headquarters or re-transmitted even in cipher without being paraphrased.

From :- C. in C. Middle East.
Recd. 2215. 28 Mar.43.

To :- The War Office.

IMPORTANT.

SD/27446 cipher. 28 Mar. MOST SECRET.

BIGOT.
Ref OZ 638 of 4 Mar from C PLF S COS ME362. 119

First. Number two planning staff now established on basis of HQ three corps. Require following increment. A appts not within ME powers Col GS (TRG) one, GSO 1 (Plans and SD) one, GSO1 (Int) one. (B) only other appt required at present DAQMG(M) one.

Second. Request earliest approval.

T.O.O. 1240 B.

C.6 (Telegrams).

To:- S.D.2 (for action)

Copies to:- C.I.G.S.
V.C.I.G.S.
D.C.I.G.S.
D.M.O.
D.D.M.O.(O)
D.Plans (2)
D.M.I.
D.S.D.
D.M.T.
D. of O.
D.F.(a)
D.M.S.(A)
D.D.M.O.(O)
D.D.M.I.(I)
D.D.S.D.
D.D.S.D.(O)
M.O.1,4,5.
G.S.(P)
S.D.2(10),3, S.D.(O)
M.I.1,17a.
M.T.(L)
M.P.2.
F.6.
Brig. A.G.Co-ord.
Brig. Q(Ops).
Brig. Jacob.
Foreign Office (G.L. Clutton Esq.)
Head of War Registry (Admiralty)
A.M.C.S.(C) Air Ministry.
Combined Ops. H.Q.

128

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(43) 38th Meeting(O)

Held on 9th March 1943

DISCUSSION ON GLOBAL SHIPPING REQUIREMENTS

(Full Minute on A/Pol. Allied/6

* * * * * *

(i) Middle East

SIR ALAN BROOKE referred to a Minute* from the Prime Minister suggesting that the General Service Reserve in Middle East appeared excessive. He (Sir Alan Brooke) said that he had found some differences between the War Office figures and those submitted by the Paymaster General and attached as an annex to the Prime Minister's minute, and suggested that Lord Cherwell and the Deputy Chief of the Imperial General Staff should go further into the matter.

With regard to the reference to operations against a certain island, Sir Alan Brooke said that plans and preparations were going forward, but it could only be mounted if shipping and landing craft were available, and this at present did not appear likely.

* * * * * *

* M.124/3 of 6th March - [redacted]

122

Dec CC/197 - n 3
& BOS (NE) 362 - n 9

S/o 127

Cover ref. C.O.S. 49/3.

SECRET.

PRIME MINISTER.

With reference to your Minute at Flag "A", the First Sea lord has now reported that Rear Admiral Palliser could not be made available and that he proposes to appoint Rear Admiral Miles as the Naval Commander.

126

2. I submit at Flag "B" a statement of his service since promotion to the rank of Captain and at Flag "C" a report by the Naval Secretary, with which the First Sea Lord agrees.

125

(Signed) H. L. ISMAY.

17th March, 1943.

Services of Rear-Admiral G.J.A. Miles, C.B.

Date of Birth - 2nd May, 1890

Promoted to Captain - 30th June, 1931

Promoted to Rear-Admiral - 8th July, 1941

.....

APPOINTMENTS

As Captain

October 1931 to December 1932	PANGBOURNE in command and as S.O. 1st Minesweeping Flotilla
March 1933 to July 1935	Deputy Director of Staff College
July 1935 to May 1937	CODRINGTON in command and as Captain (D) 3rd Destroyer Flotilla
July 1937 to July 1939	Assistant Director and Director of Tactical School
July 1939 to June 1941	NELSON in command
June 1941 to date	No.30 Military Mission

Rear-Admiral G.J.A. Miles, C.B.

Rear-Admiral Miles is an officer of considerable attainments and attractive personality. He has always had the faculty of getting on well with other people without losing independence of judgment.

In the course of his career he has been described as "an officer of exceptional ability. I desire to call special attention to the fact that he has special aptitude for making War Plans and that I consider this unusual gift should be made use of in future". Admiral Dreyer. 1932.

"His intellectual capacity and knowledge of the broader aspects of the art of war are well above the average. A very good knowledge of tactics and a really good ship handler. An adequate disciplinarian of considerable personality who never gets "rattled" in an emergency. This is particularly noticeable at sea - in fact he is a Sea Officer". Sir C. Forces 1940.

As a Commander in 1924 he was reported on by Vice-Admiral J.H.D. Cunningham, then Director of Plans as "an exceptionally loyal and capable Staff Officer. His Staff work is characterised by painstaking care, broad vision and sound judgment; ability to express his resulting conclusions in a clear and concise manner adds appreciably to the value of his work".

On the other hand he was less well reported on by Admirals Somerville and A.B. Cunningham during his period in command of the 3rd Flotilla 1935 - 37.

Sir J. Somerville said "Has a very pleasant personality and is popular with Officers and Men. His Flotilla never reached an entirely satisfactory standard due in part to the duties on which they were employed but due also in some degree to a lack of ability on his part to produce bricks without straw. Most loyal and suffers rebukes in a most praiseworthy manner. Has plenty of sound ideas and is ingenious but his judgment though excellent is at other times at fault. Well informed and takes a very keen interest in his profession. In many respects he is above the average but the fact that neither his ship nor his flotilla were in the first flight indicates his powers of leadership are not above average. I should always be glad however to have Captain Miles serving under my command".
Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean, wrote "I concur. The above report very fairly sums up the capabilities of this officer".

Sir A. Cunningham wrote "A clever and hardworking officer who has so far been rather disappointing as a Captain "D". The Flotilla under his command has not made the progress that might be expected though this is mostly due to its dispersal. Inclined to rely too rigidly on what is laid down in writing instead of his own judgment."

There is no report as to the success or otherwise of his work in Russia but officers I have spoken to from there all agree that he has done very well and been persona grata with the Russians.

To sum up, Rear-Admiral Miles has had excellent reports all through except for his period in Command of the 3rd Flotill The fact that he had spent most of his time in big ships and that this was his first destroyer Command may have had something to do with this. He had rather a difficult task as he brought a newly commissioned flotilla out to Alexandria in the middle of the Abyssinian Crisis. The other flotillas had been in commission a long time, had been together, and naturally compared very favourably with Miles's destroyers. I also don't think he had a very good team so circumstances were somewhat against him. Sir Charles Forbes whose Flag Captain he was had a high opinion of him (rating him as high as 87%) and so did Sir Frederic Dreyer.

He may be regarded as having been a very good big ship Captain and an able Staff Officer. He is clever, of attractive personality, able to get on well with other people and imperturbable in moments of crisis.

He should therefore make a good force Commander though possibly not up to the standard of Troubridge or Mack as he lacks their buoyant manner and inspiring qualities of leadership.

(Signed) F. DALRYMPLE HAMILTON

Naval Secr.

16/3.

Col. Price H. Jones. 124

Ref: C.O.S. 29/3.

SECRET

FIRST SEA LORD

Reference your minute of the 9th March informing me that Rear Admiral Miles has been appointed Naval Commander for operations in the Eastern Mediterranean, I will so inform the Prime Minister.

2. When I told the Prime Minister of your first choice (Admiral Palliser), he asked for a note about him. He will almost certainly want the same in the case of Admiral Miles. Would you be so good as to let me have one to accompany the information in paragraph 1.

(Signed) H. L. ISMAY.

12th March, 1943.

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(43) 58th Meeting

Held on 6th March 1943

1. OPERATIONS IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN - MIDDLE EAST PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(43) 35th Mtg. (O), Min.4.) -120

LIEUT. GENERAL ISMAY said that in accordance with the conclusions of the Committee at their meeting* on the 4th March, he had submitted a minute to the Prime Minister informing him of the arrangements made by the Chiefs of Staff in connection with the appointment of commanders for planning operations in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Prime Minister had replied requesting more detailed information about the proposed Naval and Air Commanders.

SIR DUDLEY POUND said that he had not finally decided who should be appointed as Naval Commander.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Invited the First Sea Lord and the Chief of the Air Staff to provide the Prime Minister with the information he had asked for.

* C.O.S.(43) 34th Mtg.(O), Min.2. -117

)COPY-

122

PRIME MINISTER'S PERSONAL MINUTE

SERIAL No. M.124/3

MINISTER OF PRODUCTION
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR
C.I.G.S.
GENERAL ISMAY

The attached table has been prepared by Lord Cherwell for me at my request and is based, I assume, on a target force of 12 Divisions in the Middle East, including the Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Armies. On this basis the General Service Reserve seems to me to be excessive. This is taken as 3 months' wastage at "intense" rate. The intense rate is roughly equal to three times the average rate actually experienced in 1942. 1942 was a very heavy year comprising the hardest fighting from May onwards, and immense losses of material were also sustained by us in our retreat. I consider that three months' supply should be calculated at the average rate of loss in 1942 and not at the "intense" rate. Also, munitions in transit should be included, subject to a percentage reduction for the average loss sustained by enemy action in transit during 1942 - a bad year. These then should be the approved General Reserves. Everything surplus to these may be used either for supplying the Turks or for the equipment of the Poles, or drawn upon to meet the needs of the Armies or, of course, for ANAKIM. The proportion of supplies from Great Britain must be reduced accordingly, thus enabling us to keep within the 40 ship limit. Exceptions to the above could be made for particular items which were new or subject to special conditions.

2. I ask that this may be taken urgently into consideration. I shall be glad to have your views before bringing the matter before the Defence Committee.

(Intd.) W.S.C.

5.3.43.

	Stocks in M.E. and in Transit at 31st Dec.1942.	Months' supply at "intense" rate.	Months' Sply. at average rate of loss. (in 1942)	Months' Sply. at Nov. 1942 rate of loss
Weapons				
2 pdr. & 6 pdr. A/T. Equipment	1,734	7	22	39
25 pdr.Equipments	1,150	21	28	89
Rifles	529,584	33	164	404
Mortars (2" & 3")	2,526	16	40	77
Cruiser Tanks	2,290	9	32	24
Infantry Tanks	768	12	19	19
Carriers	4,480	11	42	72
"B" Vehicles	125,889	13	36	88
Bofors A.A.Equipments	1,585	45	79	1,585
Ammunition				
000's	000's			
2 pdr. A.P.	2,339	4	17	37
6 pdr. A.P.	2,077	4	72	20
25pdr. H.E.Sm., A.P.	6,595	5	21	6
Bofors A.A.	2,475	3	22	14
3.7" A.A.	1,822	5	40	96
Mortar Bombs (2" & 3")	5,128	4	56	83
303" S.A.A.	573,000	5	43	45

C.O.S.(43) 35 th. Mtg (O) Item 4

~~ANNEX~~

124

DRAFT MINUTE TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

PRIME MINISTER.

118

With reference to my minute (at Flag A) on the subject of planning arrangements for the Eastern Mediterranean, Sir Dudley Pound informed the Chiefs of Staff at their meeting this morning that Rear Admiral Palliser could not be made available for the post of Naval Commander, and that he proposed to appoint in his stead Rear Admiral Miles, who would shortly be returning from his post as Head of No.30 Military Mission, Moscow.

5th March, 1943.

120

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(43) 35th Meeting (O)

Held on 5th March. 1943 Part of C.O.S(43) 57. mtg.

4. OPERATIONS IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN - MIDDLE EAST PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS.

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(43) 34th Mtg.(O), Min. 2) — 114

SIR DUDLEY POUND, referring to his remarks at the meeting the previous day, said that he had subsequently learned that Rear Admiral Palliser could not be made available, and he therefore proposed to appoint Rear Admiral Miles to command and plan operations in the Eastern Mediterranean. He enquired whether it would be possible for Rear Admiral Miles to return immediately from Russia.

SIR ALAN BROOKE said that his relief had been warned to leave towards the end of this month, but he saw no objection to the immediate return of Rear Admiral Miles to this country, where he could discuss with his successor questions affecting the handover.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Approved the above arrangements and invited Lieut. General Ismay to inform the Prime Minister accordingly. — 121

S.I.C. FILE 119

Unparaphrased Version of a Secret
Cypher Telegram not One-Time Table.

OZ 638
TOO 1730Z/4.
TOD 1740Z/4.

SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM.

IMMEDIATE.

C.O.S(43)34th Mtg(O) Min. 2.

From:- Air Ministry.

To:- C's-in-C. Middle East.

OZ 638. 4th March, 1943.

Following from Chiefs of Staff C.O.S.(M.E.) 362.

113

We approve suggestions contained in your C.C./197.

T.O.O. 1730Z/4.

CIRCULATION.

Brigadier Jacob.
Foreign Secretary.
First Sea Lord.
C.6. Tels. W/O.
A.M.C.S.(C)
C.C.O.

ANNEX II

PRIME MINISTER

With reference to your minute at Flag 'A', C.I.G.S. told the Chiefs of Staff this morning of the substance of his talk with you.

2. As a result, the Chiefs of Staff have today telegraphed to General Wilson that they approve the suggestions put forward in his CC/196 (Flag 'B') and CC/197 (Flag 'C').

3. The position as regards the appointment of Service Commanders is as follows:-

(i) Navy: The First Sea Lord has selected Rear Admiral A.F.E. Palliser - at present Second in Command, Eastern Fleet.

(ii) Army: You have approved the appointment of Lt.-General D.F. Anderson.

(iii) Air: Air Marshal Sholto Douglas telegraphed on the 24th February to C.A.S. suggesting that Air Vice Marshal Saul, A.O.C., Egypt, should be the Air Commander. C.A.S. agreed.

(Signed) H.L. ISMAY.

117

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(43) 34th Meeting (O)

Held on 4th March 1943

part of C.O.S.(43) 56th mtg. Min: 9

2. OPERATIONS IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN - MIDDLE EAST PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS. -116

(Previous reference: C.O.S.(43) 54th Meeting, Minute 4)

THE COMMITTEE gave further consideration to the telegram* from Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East, on their proposed planning arrangements for operations in the Eastern Mediterranean. In this connection the Committee referred to a Minute which the Prime Minister had addressed to the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, making certain proposals regarding command of these operations.

SIR ALAN BROOKE confirmed that, as a result of his discussions with the Prime Minister on this question, it had been decided to agree to the appointment of General Anderson, and his Corps Headquarters, to study and prepare for these operations.

SIR DUDLEY POUND said that he was proposing to make Rear Admiral Palliser available for the Naval side.

SIR CHARLES PORTAL said that he had been informed by the A.O.C.-in-C., that it was proposed to nominate Air Vice Marshal Saul on the Air side.

THE COMMITTEE:-

(a) Instructed the Secretary 119 to draft and despatch a telegram ø to Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East, informing them that the suggestions in their telegram (CC/197) -113 were approved.

118

(b) Invited Lieut.-General Ismay to submit a Minute + to the Prime Minister, informing him of the arrangements which were being made.

* CC/197 of the 27th Feb. -113
ø Sent as C.O.S.(M.E.) 362 -119
+ Annex II

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(43) 54th Meeting

Held on 2nd March. 1943

4. MIDDLE EAST PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS

-115

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(43) 31st Meeting (O), Minute 8)

SIR ALAN BROOKE informed the Committee that he had had a discussion on this subject with the Prime Minister, but that no firm decision had yet been taken. He would report further as soon as the matter had been settled, so that the Chiefs of Staff could send a reply to General Wilson.

THE COMMITTEE: -

Took note of the above statement.

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(43) 31st Meeting (O)

Held on 1st March 1943

part of C.O.S.(43) 53rd Mtg.

8. OPERATIONS IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN - MIDDLE EAST PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS. - 110

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(43)28th Meeting (O)).

THE COMMITTEE had before them a telegram* - 113 from the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East, amplifying their original proposals+ - 109 for the planning arrangements for possible operations in the Eastern Mediterranean.

In this connection, SIR ALAN BROOKE read out a minute ø - x which he had received from the Prime Minister with whom he proposed to discuss the suggested appointments.

SIR CHARLES PORTAL stated that the Prime Minister had also shown interest in the arrangements concerning the Air Commander.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Agreed to defer consideration of a reply to the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East until the Chief of the Imperial General Staff had had an opportunity of discusssing the question with the Prime Minister.

*COS/197 of 27th February. - 113
+COS/196 of 22nd February. - 109
øSerial No. M 90/3 of 28th February. - x

Item 2 Don

S.I.C. FILE 114

Unparaphrased Version of a Most Secret Cypher Telegram not One-Time Table.

IZ 811.
TOO 1050Z/27
TOR 1730Z/27.

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM.

IMMEDIATE.

From:- Mideast.

To:- Air Ministry.

CS/1970. 27th February, 1943. Your OZ 587. - 112

Personal for Prime Minister from General Wilson.

1. I fully realise and enjoy my responsibility in this matter and assure you I have no intention of passing it on to anyone else. On the other hand I do want a Corps Commander with a small staff to work out under my direction detailed plans, and to take command again under me of any forces that may be allotted to forces in the Aegean. Harwood and Sholto-Douglas are in full agreement and are anxious to appoint parallel Naval and Air Commanders for the same purpose. We feel that only in this way can our plans be brought to the highest possible state of readiness. - 113

2. The matter has since been more fully explained to Chiefs of Staff in Mideast telegram CC/197 and in a letter A.D.C/20 from me which C.I.G.S. should receive in a day or so.

T.O.O. 1050Z/27.

Circulation

Brig. Jacob
First Sea Lord
C.I.G.S.
C.A.S

113

S.I.C. FILE

Unparaphrased Version of Most
Secret Cypher Telegram Not One Time Table

IZ 808
TOO 0900Z/27
TOR 1343Z/27

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

IMMEDIATE

From:- Mideast

To:- Air Ministry C.O.S.(43)34th Mtg (O) Min. 2.

CC/197 27th February 1943

B I G O T

Following for Chiefs of Staff from Commanders in Chief.

Your C.O.S. (M.E.) 360 - 111

1. Regret proposals in our CC/196 were - 109 not fully explained.

2. What we have in mind is that Special Commanders from all three services should be appointed now.

(a) To work out detailed plans for possible operations in the Aegean. (See F/Greece/2)

(b) To be Commanders designate of the forces which may be allotted to these operations.

3. These Commanders will not prepare plans for direct air support to the Turks which will be pursued on the original SPRAWL lines.

4. On the Army side our proposal was that General Anderson should come over from P.A.I.C. On the air side, as A.O.C. in C. has since explained to C.A.S., he proposes that A.O.C. Egypt should be the Air Commander at present assuming these duties in addition to his own. On the Naval side C. in C. Levant has in mind to ask the Admiralty for a Naval Commander.

5. Our object in making this porposal is to bring all our preparations to the highest possible state of readiness so that if you do wish us, perhaps at very

short notice, to undertake any operations in the Aegean, there will be the minimum delay. If the appointment of these Commanders is left until the situation develops and they then have to get into the very complicated Aegean picture and work on a plan which is not of their making, the result will be delay and possibly failure. We think it essential therefore to take steps now to avoid such contingencies. In view of the tempo of the war and of the fact that there may be changes in the situation during the time that must elapse before HUSKY, we suggest that this is not premature but is a sound insurance.

6. Our Joint Planning Staff has already completed the first phase of some of this planning. If the second phase (i.e. detailed planning) is left to the JPS without Commanders, the drawbacks indicated in the previous paragraph will be intensified. As we can see now from HUSKY, it is a matter of some months before a firm detailed plan emerges from a JPS outline.

7. We hope very much, therefore, that you will agree to our suggestion

T.O.O. 0900Z/27

Circulation

Brigadier Jacob
Foreign Secretary
First Sea Lord
C.6 Telegrams
A.M.S.S.O.
C.C.O

S.I.C. FILE 112

Unparaphrased Version of a Most Secret Cypher Telegram not One Time Table.

OZ 587
TOO 2145Z/26
TOD 0010Z/27

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM.

IMPORTANT.

From:- Air Ministry

To:- Commander-in-Chief
Middle East.

OZ 587 26th February, 1943.

PERSONAL from PRIME MINISTER to COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF MIDDLE EAST.

Your CC/196. — 109

I am looking to you personally in this matter. If you require a Corps Headquarters or a special staff group to work under you, pray make your proposals, which can no doubt be met immediately. But there is no question of having anyone else in this except you: see your paragraph 3. You are the man quote to prepare these plans and be ready to assume responsibility for any operation in the Eastern Mediterranean that may be decided upon unquote, and the quote one man who should take a grip of it without delay unquote.

2. I should have thought you would be very keen in it.

T.O.O. 2145Z/26

Circulation.

Brigadier Jacob
C.A.S.
C.I.G.S.
First Sea Lord.

S.I.C. FILE III

Unparaphrased Version of a Most Secret Cypher Telegram not One Time Table.

C.O.S.(43) 28th Mtg.(O) Min. 1.

OZ. 550
TOO. 2005Z/24
TOD. 2025Z/24

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM.

IMMEDIATE.

From:- Air Ministry.

To:- Cs.-in-C., Middle East.

OZ. 550 24th February, 1943

B I G O T.

Following from Chiefs of Staff C.O.S.(M.E.) 360.

Reference para. 3 your CC/196.-109 We should be glad if you would clarify your intentions regarding the appointment of a "Special Commander". If intention is that he should be Task Force Commander for any operation undertaken, we consider appointment premature. If intended that he should co-ordinate planning, who will be his Naval and Air colleagues? We are not clear why planning at this stage cannot continue to be done by existing Joint Planning Staff.

TOO. 2005Z/24

(Circulation)

Brig. Jacob.
Foreign Secretary.
First Sea Lord.
C.6 Tels., War Office.
A.M.S.S.O.
C.C.O.

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110

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MOST SECRET.

Copy No. 27

C.O.S.(43) 28th Meeting (O)

WAR CABINET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Part of C.O.S.(43) 48th Meeting, Minute 5
held on WEDNESDAY, 24TH FEBRUARY, 1943,
at 10.30 a.m.

1. OPERATIONS IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN - MIDDLE EAST PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS.

109

THE COMMITTEE had before them a telegram+ from the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East, outlining their proposed planning arrangements for possible operations in the Eastern Mediterranean.

It was not clear whether the special Commander referred to in paragraph 3 of the above telegram was intended to be a Task Force Commander implying Unified Command or a Chief of Staff responsible only for planning. The system of Command for any operation in the Eastern Mediterranean would in any case be largely governed by the actual operation itself. Furthermore, it was for consideration whether it would not be better for the Middle East Joint Planning Staff to continue planning for these operations at this stage and to delay the appointment of a Commander and a special staff until detailed planning began.

THE COMMITTEE:-

111

Instructed the Secretary to draft in the light of the discussion and despatch a telegram* to the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East, asking for more information about their proposed planning arrangements.

+ CC/196 22 Feb.
* Sent as C.O.S.(M.E.) 360

COS agenda S.I.C. FILE 109

Wed ITEM 2.

Unparaphrased version of a Most Secret Cypher Telegram not One Time Table.

IZ 734.
TOO 1715Z/22.
TOR 0005Z/23.

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM.

IMPORTANT.

C.O.S.(43) 28th Mtg (O) Min. 1.

From:- Mideast.

To:- Air Ministry repeated P.A.I.C.

CC/196. 22nd February, 1943.

B I G O T.

Following for Chiefs of Staff repeated Personal for General Quinan from Commanders in Chief.

173 to B/COMMANDS

1. In conformity with the Prime Minister's Directive to the Commander in Chief Middle East Forces (Troopers telegram 52100 of 12th Feb. paras (c) and (d)) we intend to prepare detailed plans for operations in Eastern Mediterranean as diversions or alternatives to operation HUSKY regarding it as essential that we should be prepared to meet any possible changes in present plans or in the general Mediterranean situation.

2. These plans will include such operations as the capture of Crete and/or the Dodecanese with or without Turkish assistance, landing in Greece in the event of a successful HUSKY and/or Italian collapse in the Balkans. We shall also take into account the possibility that a change in the situation may lead to postponement or cancellation of HUSKY, and that, in these circumstances, a proportion of HUSKY Eastern Task Force may be available to us.

3. We think it is essential that a special commander should be appointed to prepare these plans and be ready to assume responsibility for any operation in the Eastern Mediterranean that may be decided upon. The whole problem in Eastern Mediterranean is as you know a difficult one, being much complicated by the attitude of Turkey, and we think one man should take a grip of it without delay. The switch over from the Central to the Eastern Mediterranean might conceivably come quickly.

/4. General Wilson.

4. General Wilson suggests that General Anderson, Commander Third Corps, should be given this task, having regard to the fact that One Corps Headquarters can probably now be dispensed with in P.A.I.C. If you agree, we should like General Anderson, with a very small staff (about four or five officers), over as soon as it is convenient to C.-in-C. P.A.I.C.

5. Grateful for your approval and authority to arrange details with C.-in-C. P.A.I.C.

T.O.O. 1715Z/22.

CIRCULATION.

Brig. Jacob.
Foreign Secretary.
First Sea Lord.
C.I.G.S.
C.A.S.
C.C.O.

108

MOST SECRET

From: Air Ministry.

To: Mideast.

Following for Secretary, Commanders-in-Chief Committee from Secretary, C.O.S. Committee.

Your letter CJ/21 of 14 Jan and copy No. 37 of J.P.S.(M.E.) No. 120 (Revised) received to-day.

To Col Hawkins by COS 22/1.

? Circulate to COS referred to JP in anticipation on to COS for consideration first

Item 2 Wed 24/1

104

Note.

J.P.'s (ME) No 120 is being printed and C.O.'s will be asked to formally approve examination of requirements by the Design Depts.

25/2

106B

EXTRACT FROM J.P.(43) 41 (Final)

of February 20, 1943. (complete paper on A/Pol/Allies/10)

REVIEW OF DEFENCE COMMITMENTS.

Mediterranean.

2. The Mediterranean is one of the main theatres of offensive operations in 1943. The scale of Axis attack is likely to be regulated by the progress of Allied operations. In any case, once the Axis have been driven out of North Africa, they will not attempt to regain a footing there; it is most unlikely, in fact, that even should they wish to, they could provide the necessary forces. An Axis attack on Gibraltar through Spain is equally unlikely, while invasion of Malta is highly improbable and of Cyprus out of the question. There will be no land threat to any part of the existing Middle East Command. Offensive action by Axis naval forces against North African ports and shipping in those ports (except from submarines and possibly M.T.Bs.) is most unlikely.

The rôle of the Axis air forces is likely to be strategically defensive. They will, however, employ offensive tactics, including :—

(*a*) Bombing of ports.
(*b*) Minelaying at approaches to harbours and ports.
(*c*) Bomber and torpedo bomber attacks on shipping at sea.

3. The land defence commitment for the whole of the Mediterranean theatre is at present assessed* at 14 divisions, which leaves a surplus of about 10 British and United States divisions available for offensive operations. At present it is necessary to hold at least 4 divisions in readiness for the capture of Spanish Morocco, or for immediate action in Spain in case of German aggression. As our offensive progresses, the defence commitment throughout the Mediterranean will correspondingly decrease; moreover, it should be possible to make increased use of French man-power for defensive purposes.

4. As this area is a theatre of offensive operations for 1943, no reduction of forces is possible, as any surplus over defensive requirements should remain for offensive operations.

We recommend that the Chiefs of Staff should—

(a) **Agree that no further formations be sent from the United Kingdom to this theatre beyond the airborne forces and the one further division required for offensive operations.**

(b) **Agree that the scale of defence of Gibraltar should be reduced as soon as circumstances permit.**

(c) **Invite the Commander-in-Chief, Middle East, in consultation with the Governor and Commander-in-Chief and General Eisenhower, to review the defences of Malta in the light of the changed conditions in the Central Mediterranean.**

(d) **Instruct the Defence of Bases Sub-Committee to examine and make recommendations for local defence plans for ports and bases along the South Mediterranean coastline, Tripoli (S.) to Algiers.**

(e) **Invite Genéral Eisenhower to make the fullest possible use of French man-power for defensive commitments in North Africa.**

* J.P. (42) 967.

Note: This paper was considered by the C.O.S. at their 51st Meeting (Minute 5) on 26.2.43. and the Defence of Bases Sub-Committee were asked to examine plans for local defence of ports and bases along South Mediterranean from Tripoli (S) to Algiers (see A/Policy/Allies/10)

106A

Unparaphrased Version of a Secret Cypher Telegram not One Time Table.

OZ 201.
TOO. 1627Z/21.
TOD. 1700Z/21.

SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM.

From:- Air Ministry.

To :- Cs.-in-C., Middle East.

OZ. 201. 21st January 1943.

Following for Commanders-in-Chief from Chiefs of Staff COS(ME) 351. 94 98

1. Reference your CC/176 and CC/178 and our COS(ME) 348. - 158 in A1 Dol (ARMY-AIR) 2.

2. Whole question of Allied Strategy for 1943 is still under consideration and turns largely on resources available.

3. While agreeing with you on the desirability of the operations which you propose, regret we shall not be in a position to answer your CC/176 and 178 for another two or three weeks.

T.O.O. 1627Z/21.

CIRCULATION.

Brigadier Jacob.
Foreign Secretary.
First Sea Lord Admiralty.
Head of Watch. C.6 Telegrams, War Office.
A.M.C.S. (C)

WATCH

105

V.C.I.G.S. — agrees 20/1
V.C.I.G.S. — agrees subject to amendment in last line. 20/1
V.C.A.S. — agrees 20/1.

103 ORIGINAL AT 106

The attached draft reply to telegrams CC/176 and 178 from the Middle East, has been prepared in the light of to-day's Chiefs of Staff discussion and is submitted for your comments or approval before despatch.

CRP.

20th January, 1943

SECRET.

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE.

Extract from C.O.S.(43) 17th Meeting.

Held on 20th January 1942.

3. THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN.

(J.P.(43) 29 (Final)) -103

(Previous reference C.O.S.(43) 13th Meeting, Minute 4) -99

THE COMMITTEE had before them a Report by the Joint Planning Staff covering a draft reply to telegrams CC/176 -97 and CC/178 from the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East. -98

The Committee were in agreement as to the desirability of the operations proposed by the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East. Our strategy would, however, be governed to a large extent by our resources. Until, therefore, our major strategy, which was at present under consideration with the Americans, was decided it was not possible to know whether the additional resources required by the Middle East for these operations could be provided. It should be possible, however, within the next two or three weeks to give a firm reply regarding the Middle East proposals.

THE COMMITTEE -

Instructed the Secretary to send an interim reply, in the sense of the above discussion, to the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East. Original at 106

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Circulated for the consideration of the Chiefs of Staff

COS(43)17th Mtg Min 3.

J.P.(43) 29 (Final)

19th January, 1943

WAR CABINET

JOINT PLANNING STAFF

THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

Report by the Joint Planning Staff

+

As instructed we have examined two telegrams, CC/176ø and CC/178≠, from Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East, regarding their projected operations against the Dodecanese.' We attach our report in the form of a draft telegram¤ for despatch as an interim reply.

2. Though full replies to these telegrams must await the receipt of the Commanders-in-Chiefs' Outline plan, and agreement with the Americans as to our future strategy, we consider that the Commanders-in-Chief should receive an interim reply from the Chiefs of Staff, indicating their general approval of the project, and giving some indication as to when the additional resources asked for by the Middle East can be made available.

(Signed) A.W. BUZZARD
W.H. RAY
J.N. TOMES

Cabinet War Room.

+ C.O.S.(43) 13th Meeting minute 1. ~~(O)~~ - 99
ø Annex II.
≠ Annex III
¤ Annex I.

ANNEX I

DRAFT TELEGRAM TO C's.-IN-C., MIDDLE EAST

From: Air Ministry.

To: Middle East.

. Following for Commanders-in-Chief from Chiefs of Staff.

1. Your CC/176 and CC/178, and our C.O.S.(M.E.)348. Subject to our proposed strategy being agreed with Americans we approve general conception of your project for action against Dodecanese, and agree that capture of these islands would have the most encouraging effect on Turkey.

2. At present it appears extremely improbable that the additional resources you ask for could be given you until Sardinia or Sicily has been captured.

3. With Sardinia or Sicily in our hands we think we could exercise such a continuous threat of all kinds against Italy that the Axis would be forced to keep large Air Forces there. Axis Air Forces should have been badly mauled as result of our operation and thereafter we should be able to keep them fully occupied. This would not, of course, be anything like as effective as the simultaneous launching of both our offensive and yours. To compensate for this you will probably require more Air Forces still, and we think there is a good chance of our being able to provide them once Sardinia or Sicily is in our hands.

4. These are only preliminary views. We shall be able to give you a fuller answer as soon as our major strategy is settled and when we have seen your outline plan. Meanwhile you should proceed with your preparations.

ANNEX II

Unparaphrased Version of a Secret Cypher Telegram not One Time Table.

IZ 185
TOO. 1650Z/12
TOR. 0310Z/13.

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

IMPORTANT

From:- Mideast.

To:- Air Ministry.

CC/176. 12th January 1943. Ref. COS(42) 354.(O)-21

Following for Chiefs of Staff from Commanders-in-Chief.

1. We have been considering how best we can assist you in turning this area into an immense liability for Germany this year, and so contribute relief to the Russian front.

2. The greatest contribution that could be made in this theatre would be for Turkey to come into the war, and in our telegram CC/166 we have told you of the plans we have in mind should this come about. At present, however, it seems unlikely that Turkey will come in, so we have been examining the possibility of action in the Aegean.

3. We cannot take on Crete - it is too formidable an operation. On the other hand there would be considerable advantages in capturing Rhodes and the Dodecanese -

(a) We should be able to extend operations to the northwards and open the Aegean to Smyrna. This might influence the Turks in our favour.

(b) We might be able to take Crete.

(c) If at some future date it was found possible to get back into Greece, the possession of the Dodecanese would be of great assistance. In fact we should have some flexibility of action for Middle East forces.

4. Given certain conditions, we think there is a good chance of our being able to capture Rhodes and the Dodecanese even without the use of Turkish airfields. These conditions are:-

(a) That major operations in the Central Mediterranean are taking place at the same time; unless the German air forces are preoccupied elsewhere operations in the Aegean are not feasible.

(b) The provision of certain additional resources. We are sending you details in a few days. Our requests are not excessive and we believe they could be met without prejudice to other operations.

5. The closest co-ordination with General Eisenhower's operations will be essential. We should rely on his action - his attack on Sardinia for instance - so to weaken the German air force in the eastern Mediterranean or so reduce the enemy's powers to re-enforce it, that our attack on Rhodes would become feasible. It is essential therefore that the additional resources we ask for should reach us in time to launch our attack in conjunction with a major operation in the central Mediterranean and thus to enable us to take advantage of the enemy's enforced dispersion. At the same time our operations should serve as useful cover for the Allied force attack.

6. We cannot of course guarantee that even if a major operation takes place in the central Mediterranean we shall be justified in embarking on our proposed operations. The Germans may reinforce Rhodes or the Dodecanese or some other change in the situation may take place. But we think the prospects are reasonable and sufficient to justify our asking for these resources in advance. Unless we have the equipment we should not be able to profit from a favourable set of circumstances.

7. We are sending our outline plan by fast air and meanwhile are appointing Commanders and Staffs to prepare detailed plans. We shall be glad to know as soon as possible whether we can have these resources and if so when we may expect them to arrive.

T.O.O. 1650Z/12.

ANNEX III

Unparaphrased version of a Most Secret Cypher Telegram not One Time Table.

IZ 199.
TOO 1736Z/13
TOR 0003Z/14.

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

IMPORTANT

From:- Mideast.

To:- Air Ministry.

CC/178 13th January, 1943.

Following for Chiefs of Staff from Commanders in Chief.

In continuation of paragraph 4(b) of our CC/176 of 12th January, following are the additional resources we should require for these operations.

(i) Requirements in shipping not now available in Eastern Mediterranean:-

2 Auxiliary Aircraft Carriers.
2 L.S.I. (M)
2 L.S.T. (1)
36 L.S.T. (2)
24 L.C.I. (L)
24 L.C.T. (4)

Included in these figures are the landing craft you have provisionally promised us in paragraph 2 of your C.O.S.(M.E.) 327. – B/C Ops/2

(ii) Air Forces:-

4 Heavy Bomber Squadrons.
2 T.E. Fighter Bomber Squadrons.
2 T.E. Fighter Squadrons.
2 Transport Squadrons at 30 U.E.

These figures assume that R.A.F. strengths are as at present but make no allowance for squadrons of the U.S.A.A.F. at present in Mideast.

T.O.O. 1736Z/13.

Unparaphrased Version of a Secret Cypher Telegram not One Time Table.

IZ. 253
TOO. 2301Z/18
TOR. 0618Z/19

SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM.

From:- J.S.M. Washington.

To:- War Cabinet Offices London.

LETOD 698 18th January, 1943

Reference C.O.S. (42) 428 (O) para. 2 of covering report by Chiefs of Staff.

Are we to hand copy across to U.S. Chiefs of Staff? Presume you have sent copy to Eisenhower direct. Please confirm.

TOO. 2301Z/18

(Circulation)

Brig. Jacob.

SECRET.

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE.

Extract from C.O.S.(43) 14th Meeting.

Held on 15th January 1943.

4. ALLIED STRATEGY.

(C.O.S.(43) 17 (O)) ~~-245~~ 101A.

THE COMMITTEE took note of a personal telegram to the Prime Minister from General Smuts reviewing Allied strategy.

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MOST SECRET. C.O.S. (43) 14th Mtg. minute 1 Copy No. 22

101A

C.O.S.(43) 17 (O)

14TH JANUARY, 1943

WAR CABINET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

ALLIED STRATEGY

Note by Secretary

The Prime Minister has directed that the attached telegram (T.61/3) from Field Marshal Smuts should be put before the Chiefs of Staff Committee.

(Sgd) L.C. HOLLIS

Offices of the War Cabinet,
S.W.1.

14th January, 1943.

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL TELEGRAM
SERIAL NO. T.61/3

FROM: SOUTH AFRICA (H.C.)

TO: D.O.

D. 11th Jan., 1943 5.46 p.m.
R. 11th " " 7.25 p.m.

IMMEDIATE

No. 33 MOST SECRET

Your telegram No. 34. Following for Prime Minister from General Smuts Secret and Personal begins.

X X X X X

2. I agree that Russian performance has been magnificent, great in sweep and conception and with an organisation behind it of which I had not thought the Russians capable. A finer performance than that of last winter. Three or four great German armies are placed in serious peril and even if only one is finally captured or destroyed it would be a grave German disaster.

3. But other side of the picture should also be considered. Russia by pushing well forward in separate sectors with vast forces have also given hostages to fortune. It will be noted the Germans have not withdrawn from any of the three or four threatened sectors when this was still possible. Apparently their intention is to stand and relieve these forces by counter strokes against one or more of the far flung Russian advances. Should they succeed in cutting Russia off, latter would suffer a disaster similar to that of Budenny's armies in the Dnieper and Odessa sectors last year. This is the danger in the Russian situation as I see it - at any rate as a possibility. If anything could still be done by us to draw some fifty German divisions from Russian front we could make such a counter stroke impossible and as a further consequence perhaps end the war in Europe this year.

4. It is just here that our North African mistake in strategy may cost us very dear. Bizerta like Algiers could have been taken by surprise last November while Sardinia and Sicily would have fallen this winter, the southern tip of Italy could have been captured in the Spring and the Adriatic thereby sealed up and in the summer we could have created such a situation in Italy and the Balkans that Germany would have been compelled to detach from Russian front at least fifty divisions to meet our assault and to prevent defection of the Balkans and the breakdown of Italy. In that case Turkey might also have come in on our side. We would also have brought effective relief to Russia. Now any such plan is at best much delayed if as you indicate Tunisia may be cleared only in April. A year would be lost to us and there is the further risk of another grave set back to Russia. As a further consequence the Caucasus may fall next summer and much of our Middle East force might have to be deflected to meet that peril and a united attack of all our African forces on the Axis may thus be prevented. However, this is now spilt milk.

5. On the whole, I think this plan, though delayed, still holds the field and should be preferred to an attack on Western Europe. In drawing enemy forces to Southern Europe we shall compel him to fight in unfavourable environment and with long and scanty lines of communications much of which will go through the Alps. In Western Europe, enemy has shorter and highly prepared lines and areas, every detail of which has been highly organised for defence. The defection of Italy and the Balkans, with the arming of Serbia and Greece, the stoppage of food and oil supplies and the possible drawing of Turkey into the war would appear to me to be the most promising line of attack for 1943 and the attack on the West should be postponed until, by a full use of our air superiority, enemy's strength in France and Germany has been materially reduced. Premature attack there may either miscarry or lead to the stationary war conditions of the last war.

6. In further reference to air warfare, I would add that the question of the best use of our air and especially bomber superiority continues to call for most serious consideration as both military and psychological factors are of the first importance. I continue to put anti U-boat campaign first and the destruction of military and industrial objectives on the Continent second in importance. The U-boat remains our most serious menace and enemy's last hope. I cannot urge too strongly that we organise our Anglo-American attack on U-boat to the limit of its usefulness.

7. Though as above explained our loss of time may now delay the end, the position remains otherwise very favourable from the military point of view. This should however not be unduly emphasised by our propaganda as there are indications that our peoples may become more preoccupied with peace questions than with winning the war.

8. I send a second telegram on some other non-military matters.

F/S.AFRICA/1

SECRET.

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE.

Extract from C.O.S.(43) 13th Meeting.

Held on 14th January 1943.

4. MIDDLE EAST - FUTURE OPERATIONS.

THE COMMITTEE instructed the Joint Planning Staff to examine and report on telegrams CC/176 and CC/178 from the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East. 94 98

COS(43)13th Mtg Item 4. 98

Unparaphrased version of a Most Secret Cypher Telegram not One Time Table.

IZ 199.
TOO 1736Z/13.
TOR 0003Z/14.

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM.

IMPORTANT.

From:- Mideast.

To:- Air Ministry.

Send to Symbol (note CC/176) under Telescope 114.

CC/178. 13th Jan. 1943.

Following for Chiefs of Staff from Commanders in Chief.

99

In continuation of paragraph 4 (b) of our CC/176 of 12th January, following are the additional resources we should require for these operations.

(i) Requirements in shipping not now available in Eastern Mediterranean:-

2 Auxiliary Aircraft Carriers.
2 L.S.I.(M).
2 L.S.T.(1).
36 L.S.T.(2).
24 L.C.I.(L).
24 L.C.T.(4).

Included in these figures are the landing craft you have provisionally promised us in paragraph 2 of your C.O.S.(M.E.)27 - B/Co. Ops/2

(ii) Air Forces:-

4 Heavy Bomber Squadrons.
2 T.E. Fighter Bomber Squadrons.
2 T.E. Fighter Squadrons.
2 Transport Squadrons at 30 U.E.

These figures assume that R.A.F. strengths are as at present but make no allowance for squadrons of the U.S.A.A.F. at present in Mideast.

Circulation. T.O.O. 1736Z/13.
Brig. Jacob. C.A.S.
Foreign Secretary. C.6. Telegrams, War Office.
First Sea Lord.

COS(43) 13th Mtg Min 4. 94

Unparaphrased Version of a Secret
Cypher Telegram not One-Time Table.

IZ 185.
TOO. 1650Z/12
TOR. 0310Z/13.

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM.

IMPORTANT.

From:- Mideast.

To:- Air Ministry.

Repr. to Symbol (together with CC/178) under Telegram 14. 21
CC/176. 12th January 1943. Ref COS(42) 354(O)

Following for Chiefs of Staff from Commanders-in-Chief.

1. We have been considering how best we can assist you in turning this area into an immense liability for Germany this year, and so contribute relief to the Russian front.

F|Turkey|1

2. The greatest contribution that could be made in this theatre would be for Turkey to come into the war, and in our telegram CC/166 we have told you of the plans we have in mind should this come about. At present, however, it seems unlikely that Turkey will come in, so we have been examining the possibility of action in the Aegean.

3. We cannot take on Crete- it is too formidable an operation. On the other hand there would be considerable advantages in capturing Rhodes and the Dodecanese -

(a) We should be able to extend operations to the northwards and open the Aegean to Smyrna. This might influence the Turks in our favour.

(b) We might be able to take Crete.

(c) If at some future date it was found possible to get back into Greece, the possession of the Dodecanese would be of great assistance. In fact we should have some flexibility of action for Middle East Forces.

4. Given certain conditions, we think there is a good chance of our being able to capture Rhodes and the Dodecanese even without the use of Turkish airfields. These conditions are -

(a) That major operations in the central Mediterranean are taking place at the same time; unless the German air forces are preoccupied elsewhere operations in the Aegean are not feasible.

(b) The provision of certain additional resources. We are sending you details in a few days. Our requests are not excessive and we believe they could be met without prejudice to other

/prejudice to other

operations.

5. The closest co-ordination with General Eisenhower's operations will be essential. We should rely on his action - his attack on Sardinia for instance - so to weaken the German air force in the eastern Mediterranean or so reduce the enemy's powers to re-enforce it, that our attack on Rhodes would become feasible. It is essential therefore that the additional resources we ask for should reach us in time to launch our attack in conjunction with a major operation in the central Mediterranean and thus to enable us to take advantage of the enemy's enforced dispersion. At the same time our operations should serve as useful cover for the Allied force attack.

6. We cannot of course guarantee that even if a major operation takes place in the central Mediterranean we shall be justified in embarking on our proposed operations. The Germans may reinforce Rhodes or the Dodecanese or some other change in the situation may take place. But we think the prospects are reasonable and sufficient to justify our asking for these resources in advance. Unless we have the equipment we should not be able to profit from a favourable set of circumstances.

7. We are sending our outline plans by fast air and meanwhile are appointing Commanders and Staffs to prepare detailed plans. We shall be glad to know as soon as possible whether we can have these resources and if so when we may expect them to arrive.

T.O.O. 1650Z/12.

(CIRCULATION)

Brigadier Jacob.
Foreign Secretary.
First Sea Lord.
C.6. Tels.
C.A.S.

UNPARAPHRASED VERSION OF A SECRET
CYPHER TELEGRAM NOT ONE TIME TABLE

OZ. 51
TOO. 0240Z/5
TOD. 0305Z/5

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

IMPORTANT

From:- Air Ministry

To:- Britman Washington
Repeated Freedom Algiers (by Etousa as No.1051, T.O.O.0410Z/5)

OZ.51 5th January 1943.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No.C.O.S.(W)427

Reference NAF 76. -93

We have examined proposed development of airfields in North Africa, and have the following comments:-

(a) We suggest that first priority should be given to development of airfields.

(i) In Eastern sector fighter airfields - to give additional cover for forward troops and to be prepared for eventual employment in BRIMSTONE.

(ii) In Eastern and Central sectors, for protection of sea communications by land-based aircraft, and for bombers for employment in BRIMSTONE.

In this respect we suggest that proposals to develop airfields in Central and Western sectors covering Spanish Moroccan border should be relegated to low priority in conformity with degree of threat which may be expected.

(b) Without adequate signals network, operation of airfields is severely handicapped. Provision of requisite communications should be accorded high priority.

/(c) We shall be

(c) We shall be grateful for the earliest possible advice of any assistance you may require from us.

T.O.O. 0240Z/5

Circulation

Brig. Jacob
Foreign Secretary
First Sea Lord
C.6 Tels, War Office
A.M.C.S(C)

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(43) 3rd Meeting

Held on 4th January 1942

9. DEVELOPMENT OF AIRFIELDS IN NORTH AFRICA

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(43) 2nd Mtg., Minute 8). -93

SIR CHARLES PORTAL stated that the Air Staff had now completed their examination of the proposals for airfield development submitted by General Spaatz in his telegram+ dated 31st December. 3673 from Algiers -93

The proposed layout was not entirely satisfactory, since General Spaatz appeared to be devoting too much of his resources to the development of airfields in the West - apparently with the object of catering for possible requirements if operations were ever to be undertaken against Spanish Morocco - at the expense of the really urgent needs in the Centre and in the East on the Tunisia border. These were required for the protection of sea communications, and would be essential to provide effective cover for future operations, as well as to assist in operations in Tunisia.

SIR CHARLES PORTAL suggested that a reply should be sent to Washington giving them our comments and also pointing out the importance of developing simultaneously an adequate communications network. We should moreover require the earliest possible advice of the assistance which we might be asked to provide.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Sent as C.O.S.(W)427 -96

Instructed the Secretary to draft and despatch a telegram*, after approval by the Chief of the Air Staff, to the Joint Staff Mission, repeated to General Eisenhower, bringing out the points raised in discussion.

MOST SECRET 94

4th January, 1943.

-96

Dear Carver,

(W)427

I enclose the draft C.O.S. telegram to J.S.M. with which C.A.S. agrees subject to certain small amendments which have been incorporated.

Yours sincerely,

R. S. Crauford

Major L.J.Carver,
Offices of the War Cabinet,
Great George Street,
S.W.1.

S E C R E T

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S. (43) 2nd Meeting

Held on 2nd January 1942

8. FUTURE BUSINESS:

... ... [3693 - J.S.M. 49 (NAF 76)]

(b) Development of Airfields in French North Africa

~~W. 3763 of 31st Dec. from Algiers.~~

THE COMMITTEE were informed that the Air Staff were examining a telegram[+] from General Eisenhower on the proposed development of airfields in French North Africa.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Agreed to consider both these matters on Monday 4th January.

14

B/Command 12

MOST SECRET

From: ALGIERS 3727

To: USFOR LONDON NAF 76

PRIORITY Dated: Jan 1st 1037Z

Recd: Jan 1st 1730Z

3727

1st January, 1943

NAF 76

The signal bearing the above quoted numbers is a repetition of Algiers No. 3673 93 and J.S.M. 649. 93 It is therefore requested that either of these signals be regarded as NAF 76.

Circulation:

Brig. Jacob
Foreign Secretary
First Sea Lord
C.I.G.S.
C.A.S.

MOST SECRET.

INCOMING MESSAGE
HEADQUARTERS ETOUSA.

Reference No. 3673.
Dated: Dec 31st 1734Z.
Received: Jan 1st 0300Z.

PRIORITY.

From:- Algiers.

To: AGWAR Washington.

[ALSO NAF. 76]

repeated as J.S.M.649

REF. No. 3673 31st December, 1942.

"EDITED LITERAL TEXT".

Interior Addresses: For: Combined Chiefs of Staff.
From: Spaatz.
Signed: Eisenhower.

R.4560 (FAN. 46) - 90

References: Your 382 dated December 23rd. (No record)

Time Table and short term program for North Africa Airfield development follows:

I. EASTERN SECTOR, (East of North South Line through Blica), which is divided into five areas;

1. Algiers Area. Two fields, namely Maison Blanche, all weather field ready February 1st; Blida, all weather field ready February 1st.

2. Setif Area. One field to be used only for R.A.F. installations, not in need of construction.

3. Heavy Bomber Area. Five dry weather fields in vicinity of Telergma, all ready by January 5th, Biskra, now in operation but evacuation planned to Telergma by March 15th account seasonal sand storms.

4. Medium Bomber Area. Four fields namely Canrobert, Ain Beida, Oul Mene one and Oul Mene two, will be all weather fields by March 1st.

/5. Fighter and

5. Fighter and Light Bomber Area. Two fields now located, namely, Bone now in operation, Duzzerville all weather steel plank ready February 1st, Jemmapes and Guelma all weather Sommerfield Track ready February 1st., Souk Ahras all weather now; Soul El Khemis all weather now; Souk El Krba all weather now; Youks Le Bain dry weather now, all weather March 1st; Tebessa in operational now, all weather March 1st; Thelepte dry weather now, all weather March 1st; five additional fields will be located in Area Kasserine Feriana Gafsa Maxnussy Sbeitla, all weather Somerfeld Track March 1st.

II. CENTRAL SECTOR, (Oran and vicinity), divided into two areas:

1. Heavy Bomber Area. Five all weather fields, namely La Senia and Tafaraoui ready February 1st; Lourmel number 1, Nouvion and Relixane ready March 1st. Six dry weather dispersal fields, namely four in vicinity of Mascara ready January 15th and Lourmel number 2 and Lourmel number 3 in operation now.

2. Fighter and Light Bomber Area. In vicinity of Oujda which is now ready for dry weather operation, it is planned to develop five additional fields for light bombers and two for fighters, namely Oggax and Perregaux. These fields will not be constructed until it becomes evident that heavy bomber force must be transferred to vicinity of Oran for operation to the North against Spain.

III. WESTERN SECTOR, which is divided into two areas:

1. Atlantic Coast. Two dry weather fields suitable all types, namely Casablanca and Marrakech now ready. Three all weather fields suitable all types namely Mediouna, Rabat Sale CTP and Port Lyautey ready January 15th.

2. Moroccan Border. Three dry weather fields suitable for fighters, namely Meknes, Fex and Taxa ready now; two dry weather fields, namely Ras El Ma ready January 10th, and Guercif ready February 1st; surveys being made for four additional fields suitable for fighter and light bomber operations.

/ IV. LONG TERM.

IV. LONG TERM PROGRAMME. prepared and being reviewed. Will go forward within 10 days. A check is being made of arrivals of personnel and materials as well as of the possible development of local supplies. Information will be furnished as to assistance required from you as soon as the check is completed.

(Relayed to AGWAR By Signal Centre. LAM)

Circulation.
Brig. Jacob.
Foreign Secretary.
First Sea Lord.
C.G. Telegrams, War Office.
A.M.C.S(C).

92

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S. 208th Meeting (O)

Held on 28th December 1942

3. DEVELOPMENT OF AIRFIELDS IN FRENCH NORTH AFRICA.

(Previous reference C.O.S.(42) 351st Meeting, Minute 2) 29 A.35 24th Dec. 34

THE COMMITTEE had before them a personal telegram from Air Marshal Welsh to the Chief of the Air Staff revealing an unsatisfactory state of affairs with regard to the development of airfields in French North Africa.

Enquiries made at Allied Force Rear Headquarters regarding the programme for airfield construction in North Africa had elicited no definite information. It was noted, however, that as a result of the recent telegram C.O.S. (W) 899 — 30 to the Joint Staff Mission, the Combined Chiefs of Staff had asked* General Eisenhower to report on his requirements in personnel and material for construction work and his programme for airfield development.

FAN. 45 — 32

THE COMMITTEE:-

Agreed to await General Eisenhower's reply to the Combined Chiefs of Staff before pursuing this matter further.

Ref. 601 (12) 208th Mtg. (O) minute 3.

91

A.T.

MOST SECRET.
CYPHER TELEGRAM. MS.5846

RECD. AMCS 0322A HRS 25 DEC. 1942.

RECIRC. AMCS 0949A HRS 25 DEC. 1942.
(AUTHY P.A. TO C.A.S.)

TO:- AIR MINISTRY WHITEHALL

FROM:- E.A.C. ALGIERS.

IMMEDIATE. MOST SECRET.

A.35 24 DEC.

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL FOR C.A.S. FROM WELSH.

YOUR AX.341 / 85 21 DEC. TO HANDLE THIS NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT SOME 50 AIRFIELDS WILL BE NECESSARY. FROM SURVEY OF COUNTRY TO DATE I HAVE NO DOUBT SUFFICIENT SITES CAN BE FOUND. DURING THE 8 TO 9 MONTHS DRY WEATHER THESE CAN BE USED WITH MINIMUM CONSTRUCTION AND WITHOUT PREPARED RUNWAYS. DURING THE WET SEASON DECEMBER TO FEBRUARY NO AIRFIELD IS USABLE WITHOUT RUNWAYS. THIS WILL INVOLVE SUPPLY OF MUCH MATERIAL. UP TO PRESENT WE HAVE CONCENTRATED ON PREPARING AND IMPROVING FIELDS ESSENTIAL FOR PROVISION OF COVER FOR HARBOURS AND SHIPPING AND FOR SUPPORT OF ARMY IN PRESENT BATTLE. THIS WORK IS NOT YET COMPLETE. LIMITING FACTORS ARE MATERIAL AND TRANSPORTATION ESPECIALLY THE LATTER. HAVING REGARD TO THE ARMYS DIFFICULT POSITION I HAVE HAD A FAIR SHARE OF AVAILABLE TRANSPORT BUT IT HAS NOT BEEN ENOUGH TO MEET EXISTING REQUIREMENTS.

PART TWO. IT WOULD BE QUITE BEYOND THE CAPACITY? OF THE ALREADY INADEQUATE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM TO BUILD UP AND MAINTAIN AN AIR FORCE OF THE SIZE CONTEMPLATED AND AT THE SAME TIME SUPPORT A LARGE ARMY. MUCH RAIL AND ROAD DEVELOPMENT WOULD FIRST BE NECESSARY UNLESS THE SIZE OF THE LAND FORCES IS TO BE DRASTICALLY REDUCED. AS REGARDS PLANS FOR THE FUTURE I MUST ADMIT THEREFORE THAT I AM UNEASY. FUNCTIONS AND MAINTENANCE OF THE R.A.F. PRESENT NO PARTICULAR DIFFICULTIES BUT I HAVE FAILED TO DISCOVER ANY BALANCED PLAN FOR THE FUTURE EMPLOYMENT OF THE LAND AND AIR FORCES AS A WHOLE BASED ON STRATEGICAL REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIVE POSSIBILITIES AND POTENTIALITIES. IT IS THIS WHICH IS CAUSING ME CONCERN. TO THE BEST OF MY BELIEF NO APPRECIATION HAS BEEN PRODUCED BY THE AMERICANS AND NEITHER ROBB NOR I HAVE ANY KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT THEIR INTENTIONS ARE. I HAVE STRESSED AND WILL CONTINUE TO STRESS WITH THE AMERICANS THE URGENT NECESSITY FOR A DETAILED APPRECIATION AND AGREED PLAN OF FUTURE OPERATIONS. I WOULD INDEED BE GLAD IF YOU WOULD REPRESENT THIS TO THE U.S. CHIEFS OF STAFF. IN THE MEANTIME THE TWO AIR FORCES ARE WORKING MODERATELY WELL TOGETHER BUT THERE IS MUCH ADMINISTRATIVE OVERLAPPING BETWEEN THEM AND THE TWO ARMIES AND CONSEQUENT WASTE OF EFFORT. UNTIL AND UNLESS WE HAVE A CLEAR CUT PLAN OF THE JOINT AND INDIVIDUAL ROLES OF THE TWO FORCES AFTER THE EVICTION OF THE AXIS NO REAL PROGRESS IS POSSIBLE. THERE IS LITTLE TIME AND THE URGENCY IS PRESSING.

T. OF O. 2145/A/24.

COPIES TO:-
C.A.S. (2 COPIES), V.C.A.S.
A.C.A.S.(P)(ACTION) (2 COPIES), D.M.O.

MOST SECRET

INCOMING MESSAGE
ETOUSA

Ref. No: R4560 (FAN 45)
Dated: Dec 23 1551Z
Rec'd: Dec 23 2025Z

ROUTINE

From:- W/R WASHINGTON

To:- USFOR LONDON

Ref. No. R.4560 (FAN 45) 23rd December 1942.

EDITED LITERAL TEXT

Interior Addresses: For: EISENHOWER
From: COMBINED CHIEFS OF STAFF

1. It has been noted your present difficulties due lack of all weather airfields suitable modern types. Assume you are doing everything possible during present operations to improve the facilities.

2. Chain of airfields in North Africa and particularly in Tunisia will be of paramount importance both in connection with reopening of Mediterranean to military traffic and for subsequent air offensive from Tunisia.

3. Your report on any assistance in personnel or material you require from USA or UK is required as early as possible; also your program and time table for North Africa airfield development.

(RALAYED TO ALGIERS BY SIGNALS)

Circulation

Brig. Jacob
Foreign Secretary
First Sea Lord
C.6 Tels, War Office
A.M.C.S(C)
C.C.O.
Mr. Strang, Foreign Office

1st Seaford may rais
24/12.

89

SECRET.

C.I.G.S.
FIRST SEA LORD.
C.A.S.
C.C.O.

AIR OPERATIONS IN NORTH AFRICA. - 86

(Ref: C.O.S.(42) 351st Meeting, Minute 2, Conclusion (c)).

I was instructed to make enquiries at Allied Force Rear Headquarters regarding the programme for airfield construction in North Africa.

2. ETOUSA (rear echelon A.F.H.Q.) have no knowledge of General Eisenhower's plans.

General Hughes (Chief of Staff) expressed concern at the lack of information in his possession and said that a cable was being drafted for despatch to A.F.H.Q. asking whether General Eisenhower is satisfied with the present programme for the supply of equipment of all kinds (including maintenance and construction equipment for airfields) or whether he anticipates making further requests. General Hughes said that it seemed possible that some of the latter, if required urgently, may have to be supplied from the United Kingdom.

3. It has so far been their intention to obtain all supplies of this nature (airfield construction) from the United States in order to keep demands to one channel and to avoid having two different types of equipment in the area.

4. I understand that the senior American Air Force Engineer is paying a visit to the theatre. Should he return via the United Kingdom we should have a better appreciation of the situation than is at present possible.

5. In the meanwhile a telegram was sent to the Joint Staff Mission instructing them to press the U.S. Chiefs of Staff to take an interest in this question.

(Sgd) L. C. HOLLIS

23rd December, 1942.

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S. 353rd Meeting

Held on 22nd December 1942

4. NORTH AFRICA AND THE LEVANT - REQUIREMENTS FOR SECURITY.

(C.O.S.(42) 460 (O)) - 84 ,71

(Previous reference C.O.S.(42) 343rd Meeting, Minute 3 (a))

C.O.S.(42)428(O) - 74

THE COMMITTEE had before them a Minute by the Prime Minister commenting on their Report[X] on the forces necessary to protect shipping in the Mediterranean and to provide for the security of North Africa and the Levant.

SIR ALAN BROOKE said that it was clear that the first essential was to reach agreement as to the British and American spheres of responsibility in North Africa. He suggested therefore that a minute should be submitted to the Prime Minister based on the recent report on this matter by the Joint Planning Staff.

THE COMMITTEE:-

(a) Took note of the above Minute by the Prime Minister.

(b) Instructed the Secretary to submit a Minute to the Prime Minister recommending that the military and political boundaries between the British and American spheres of responsibility in North Africa should be the existing frontier between Tunisia and Tripolitania.

84

Unparaphrased Version of a Secret Cypher Telegram not One Time Table.

OZ. 2277
TOO. 1825Z/21
TOD. 1845Z/21

SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM.

IMPORTANT.

From:- Air Ministry.

To:- Britman, Washington.

OZ. 2277 21st December, 1942

Following from Chiefs of Staff No. C.O.S.(W) 399.

Reference C.O.S.(W) 373. - 69

We cannot let question of air field development in North Africa remain in doubt. This is a vitally important matter which brooks no delay and upon which the success of future operations in the Mediterranean will largely depend.

2. If everything is going ahead as it should, and special equipment and expert advice on the spot are adequate, Eisenhower can at least be asked to say so and set our minds at rest.

3. It seems as much in American as in our interests to have an assurance on this matter, and you are requested to raise it with the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

TOO. 1825Z/21

(Circulation)

Brig. Jacob.
Foreign Secretary.
War Registry, Admiralty.
C.6. Tels., War Office.
A.M.C.S.(C).
C.C.O.

86

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S. 351st Meeting

Held on 21st December 1942

2. AIR OPERATIONS IN FRENCH NORTH AFRICA.

(Previous reference C.O.S.(42) 331st Meeting, Minute 6(B)) - 11

1.2.2649 - 83

THE COMMITTEE had before them a telegram* from the Joint Staff Mission indicating that the Americans did not consider it necessary to ask General Eisenhower for his progress in and programme for North African airfield development, and asking whether the matter should be pressed further.

SIR ALAN BROOKE said that it was most important and a matter of urgency to get responsibility clarified so that work on the airfields could begin without delay. He was anxious that it should be confirmed with General Eisenhower that the special personnel and material would be provided from American sources and not by us.

SIR CHARLES PORTAL said that he had raised the question of airfield development with Allied Force Headquarters and a survey was understood to have been made. He handed round a draft telegram which he proposed to send personally to Air Marshal Welsh asking him to report how far the survey had progressed and what plans were being made for the future. He suggested that, to avoid loss of time, enquiry might also be made at Allied Force Rear Headquarters regarding this matter. 85

During discussion it was agreed that since the opening of the Mediterranean to our traffic and any future operations in that theatre would depend on the organisation of airfields, we should press the Americans on this matter.

THE COMMITTEE:-

(a) Instructed the Secretary to send a telegram, in the sense of the above discussion, instructing the Joint Staff Mission to press this matter with the American Chiefs of Staff. Sent as C.O.S.(W)399 - 84

(b) Took note with approval of the personal telegram which the Chief of the Air Staff was sending to Air Marshal Welsh.

(c) Instructed the Secretary to make enquiries at Allied Force Rear Headquarters regarding the programme for airfield construction in North Africa.

DRAFT SIGNAL TO ALGIERS

SECRET

85

Personal for Air Marshal Welsh from C.A.S.

1. It is evident that once we have evicted Axis from Africa deployment of bulk of Anglo/American Air Force numbering some 1800 initial equipment on air-fields within striking distance of Italy and the islands will be a matter of extreme importance and urgency and a necessary preliminary to any further large scale offensive operations.

2. Can you tell me by personal signal how far survey of air-fields and potential sites has progressed and what plans are being made for the future?

3. I am most reluctant to trouble you at this stage but I want if necessary to be able to press this vitally important matter with American Chiefs of Staff in advance so as to ensure that all possible help is provided in time.

20th Dec. 1942.

✓ CAS is sending

Ref. COS (42) 353rd Mtg. minute 4.

84

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

The circulation of this paper has been strictly limited.

It is issued for the personal use of Brig. Hollis (Miss Bright)

TO BE KEPT UNDER LOCK AND KEY

It is requested that special care may be taken to ensure the secrecy of this document

MOST SECRET.

Copy No. 23

C.O.S.(42) 460 (O)

20TH DECEMBER, 1942

WAR CABINET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

NORTH AFRICA AND THE LEVANT: REQUIREMENTS FOR SECURITY

Note by Secretary

14

The Prime Minister has minuted as follows on a Report[x] by the Chiefs of Staff, submitted to him in accordance with C.O.S.(42)333rd Meeting, Minute 3 (a) -

41

"GENERAL ISMAY FOR C.O.S. COMMITTEE"

This paper may well serve as a basis for discussion. If and when the war moves northward, the character and degree of mobility of the forces specified might require to be altered rather than their numbers. Second-line units might serve for garrison purposes. It would not be necessary for instance except in Morocco or Egypt to keep armoured divisions of standard battle quality far away from all potential danger. A feature should surely be made of the establishment of a great long-range offensive aircraft organisation in Tunisia.

No account is taken of the five or six French divisions, which should certainly be brought into play, perhaps offensively, to the northward. We may take it the French in North Africa will go on with us to the end, and it is about the only thing they can do. I presume it is not intended that the divisions shall all be standardized units but that they will be adapted to the tasks of their particular location, and that the expression "division" means "equivalent in suitable war power".

(Intd.) W.S.C.

(Signed) L.C. HOLLIS.

Offices of the War Cabinet, S.W.1.

20TH DECEMBER, 1942.

x C.O.S.(42)428(O)

Unparaphrased Version of Secret Cypher
Telegram Not One Time Table

IZ 2679
TOO 2001Z/18
TOR 0010Z/19

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

IMPORTANT

From:- J.S.M. Washington

To:- War Cabinet Offices London

LETOD 545 18th December 1942 Your COS (W) 373-69

Air staff have tried hard to sell this idea on staff level, but could raise no enthusiasm for despatch of proposed message. Americans point out that build up of Torch includes air field construction units and plant and that in recent conversations with Tedder, the subject of development must surely have been raised. Also experts have been lent from Middle East to Eisenhower.

2. Doubt if we shall do any good by raising matter on higher level. Do you still wish us to push it.

T.O.O. 2001Z/18

Circulation

Brigadier Jacob

83

COS(42) 351st Mtg Item 2.

Unparaphrased Version of Secret Cypher
Telegram Not One Time Table

IZ 2679
TOO 2001Z/18
TOR 0010Z/19

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

IMPORTANT

From:- J.S.M. Washington

To:- War Cabinet Offices London

69

18th December 1942 Your COS (W) 373

Air staff have tried hard to sell this idea on staff level, but could raise no enthusiasm for despatch of proposed message. Americans point out that build up of Torch includes air field construction units and plant and that in recent conversations with Tedder, the subject of development must surely have been raised. Also experts have been lent from Middle East to Eisenhower.

2. Doubt if we shall do any good by raising matter on higher level. Do you still wish us to push it.

T.O.O. 2001Z/18

Circulation

Brigadier Jacob
First Sea Lord.
C.G. Tels., C.O.
C.A.S.
C.C.S.

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The circulation of this paper has been strictly limited.

It is issued for the personal use of Brigadier Hollis

TO BE KEPT UNDER LOCK AND KEY

It is requested that special care may be taken to ensure the secrecy of this document

MOST SECRET.

Copy No. 21

81

C.O.S.(42) 193rd Meeting (O)

Copy on D/Poland/2

WAR CABINET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Part of C.O.S.(42) 339th Meeting (Minute 11) held on TUESDAY 8TH DECEMBER 1942 at 10.30 a.m.

OFFENSIVE STRATEGY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

J.P.(42) 990; J.I.C.(42) 462; D/Germany/11
C.O.S.(42) 430 (O). 93
(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(42) 176th Mtg.(O)). 24

THE COMMITTEE had before them:-

(a) A report by the Joint Planning Staff giving broad recommendations for the development of our offensive strategy in the Mediterranean;

(b) A report by the Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee on German Strategy in 1943;

(c) A note by the Secretary covering a Minute by the Prime Minister and a Memorandum by General Sikorski on Allied Strategy in general. In his Minute the Prime Minister had drawn attention to two points raised by General Sikorski -

(i) The use of the Polish First Army Corps; and

(ii) The request for the return to this country of the 5,000 men urgently needed for the Polish Air Force, Paratroop Brigade and Armoured Division.

SIR ALAN BROOKE first referred to General Sikorski's Memorandum. He suggested that it was as yet too early for us to enter into any firm commitment for the employment of the Polish First Army Corps, but that we should bear General Sikorski's wishes in mind when the opportunity arose for their active employment. On the second point, he said that over 6,000 Poles had already been brought to this country from the Middle East, leaving some 4,500 still to come. These were at present being brought back in small batches in returning ships of W.S. convoys and he undertook to see whether this process could be speeded up.

A general discussion on Mediterranean strategy ensued, which brought out the point that we require a clearer picture of the comparative diversion of effort from the Russian front which we might impose upon the Germans by adopting either of the alternative courses open to us in 1943:-

(a) that we subordinate everything to preparing to carry out ROUNDUP on the greatest possible scale sometime in 1943; or

(b) that we proceed actively to seize and follow up the openings which may be presented to us in the Mediterranean.

THE COMMITTEE:-

(a) Agreed to give further consideration to our Mediterranean strategy as soon as the report/ by the Joint Planning Staff on Future Strategy was ready;

(b) Requested the Joint Planning Staff to submit their report, if possible, by the end of the week;

(c) Took note that the Chief of the Imperial General Staff would reply to General Sikorski in the sense of his statement at the meeting;

(d) Instructed the Secretary to reply to the Prime Minister's minute on General Sikorski's Memorandum in the light of (b) above.

/ Ref. C.O.S.(42) 335th Meeting, Minute 11.

A/Strat/2

Offices of the War Cabinet, S.W.1.

8TH DECEMBER, 1942.

B/B 9/12 10/12 80

See G/Ns comment in COS(42) 400 (O)

No to asked to say form 15/5/11th

Mr Kipna says "Top of box."

SECRET

PRIME MINISTER

-71

The Chiefs of Staff have been considering what sort of forces will be required -

(a) to protect shipping in the Mediterranean once it has been opened for military traffic; and

(b) to provide security for the Mediterranean littoral from Syria to French Morocco.

COS(42)426(O) 2. The figures suggested in the attached report should not, in the Chiefs of Staff's view, be regarded as hard and fast requirements, but are merely intended to give all concerned a basis on which to work. -74

X 3. The Chiefs of Staff propose to send their ideas to the Combined Chiefs of Staff, Washington, General Eisenhower and Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East.

(Signed) L.C. Hollis.

(Read)

W.S.C.
20.XII.

7th December, 1942.

X Watch.

Symbol agenda PM CAB 5/11

79

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 337th Meeting

Held on 4th December 1942

A/Strat/2

6. FUTURE STRATEGY.

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(42) 192nd Meeting (O), Minute 1)

C.C/149 5/12-46

Reference was made to a Telegram+ from the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East, requesting information on the state of internal affairs in Italy, and a appreciation of German Strategy in the Mediterranean in the event of an Italian collapse.

J.I.C(42)462(Final)

THE COMMITTEE were informed that a summary of a Report% on German Strategy in 1943 by the Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee was being telegraphed to the Middle East. The Joint Planning Staff had prepared a Report@ on our offensive strategy in the Mediterranean which, when approved by the Chiefs of Staff, would provide the information required by the Commanders-in-Chief.

J.P.(42)990

75

THE COMMITTEE:-

Took note of the above and instructed the Secretary to despatch a reply accordingly to Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East.

O/O D/Germany/1.

78

UNPARAPHRASED VERSION OF A SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM
NOT ONE TIME TABLE.

OZ 2147.
TOO 1410Z/7.
TOD 1500Z/7.

SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM.

IMPORTANT.

From: Air Ministry.

To : Britman Washington.

OZ 2147. 7th December 1942.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No. COS(W) 387.

Your JSM 508 1 Dec.

Following 34 L.G'S in Cyrenaica are being used by Operational Aircraft Middle East.

ABIAR ZAID (L.G.156); ADEM(L.G.144): AMUD (L.G.147); ARCA, Birel (L.G.143): BARCE: BARDIA/MENASTIR: BENGHASI/BERCA No.1; BENGHASI/BERCA No.2; BENGHASI/BERCA No.3; BENINA: DERNA/EL FTAIAH: DERNA/WEST: GAMBUT (L.G.139); GAMBUT/West (L.G.159); HANASCIA (L.G.142); GAZALA N (L.G.149); GAZALA S (L.G.150); GAZALA NO.3 (L.G.152): GIALO: JEDABYA: KUFRA: MAGRUM: MARAUA: MARTUBA 1; MARTUBA 2; MARTUBA 3; MARTUBA 4; MARTUBA 5; MSUS 1; MSUS 2; SOLUK: TMIMI NO.1; TOBRUK (L.G.145); TOBRUK (L.G.146);

All above are unserviceable after heavy rain. Map showing latest position being despatched forthwith.

2. Middle East have work in hand on highest priority to make following L.G's all weather.

MERSA MATRUH: EL ADEM: BENINA.

3. It is intended to use in due course the following 19 L.G's in Tripolitania for operational aircraft.

/ ARAE PHILAENORUM

ARAE PHILAENORUM (Marble Arch): BUERAT EL HSUN: CASTEL BENITO: HON: MERDUMA: MISURATA MARINA: MISURATA WEST: MURZUK NO.1; NOFILIA NORTH: NOFILIA NO.2; SEBHA: SIRTE: SORMAN. TAMET: TAUORGA: TRIPOLI/MELLAHA: ZANZUR: ZAUIA: ZUARA.

Airfield Map A.I.2(B) 33/14 despatched 30 Nov. refers.

T.O.O.1410Z/7.

(Circulation)

Brig Jacob.
Foreign Secretary.
War Registry Admiralty.
A.6. Telegrams W/O
A.M.C.S.(C)
C.C.O.

74

S E C R E T

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 334th Meeting

Held on 7th December 1942

1. PROGRAMME FOR DEVELOPMENT OF AIRFIELDS IN NORTH AFRICA.

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(42) 333rd Meeting, Min. 2) - 72

SIR CHARLES PORTAL informed the Committee that in accordance with the decision taken at their Meeting on C.O.S.(42) 333rd mtg min 2 December 1st., a telegram containing the relevant information concerning the development of airfields in Libya, had been prepared in answer to a previous telegram from the Joint Staff Mission. J.S.M.508 - 70

THE COMMITTEE:-

Instructed the Secretary to despatch the Telegram* to the Joint Staff Mission. C.O.S.(W)384 - 78

COS(42)337th Mtg Item 6.
76

Unparaphrased version of a Secret Cypher Telegram
not One Time Table.

IZ 2484.
TOO 1815Z/5.
TOR 0020Z/6.

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM.

IMPORTANT.

From:- Mideast.

To:- Air Ministry.

CC/149 5th December, 1942.

Following for Chiefs of Staff from Commanders in Chief.

1. In event of total Italian collapse, we may be offered a fleeting opportunity of improving our strategic situation in the Middle East.

2. We have no reliable information of the true state of affairs in Italy nor of the likelihood of Italy falling out of the War. We would be grateful for information on this point. May we also be kept informed as the situation develops.

3. If Italy should cease fighting, we may be faced with a race with German forces for the occupation of territories now occupied by the Italians. In order that we may be prepared for such an eventuality, we would be grateful for a J.I.C. appreciation of German strategy in the Mediterranean in the event of an Italian collapse.

Circulation. T.O.O. 1815Z/5.

Brigadier Jacob.
Foreign Secretary.
First Sea Lord.
C.6. Telegrams, War Office.
A.M.C.S.(C).
C.C.O.

The circulation of this paper has been strictly limited. It is issued for the personal use of Brigadier Hollis (Hon Brought)

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

Printed for the War Cabinet. December 1942.

MOST SECRET. **Copy No.** 22

J.P. (42) 990.
December 5, 1942.

Circulated for the consideration of the Chiefs of Staff

TO BE KEPT UNDER LOCK AND KEY

It is requested that special care may be taken to ensure the secrecy of this document

WAR CABINET. COS(42) 193rd Mtg (O).

Joint Planning Staff.

OFFENSIVE STRATEGY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

Report by the Joint Planning Staff.

AT their meeting on the 9th November* the Chiefs of Staff instructed the Joint Planning Staff and the Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee :—

(i) to examine and make recommendations on action which might be taken on the assumption that success in "Torch" is quick and complete;
(ii) to re-examine policy towards Italy in light of success in "Lightfoot" and "Torch" and of accepted strategy towards Italy.†

2. Later‡ the above terms of reference were amplified to include recommendations on how best to take advantage of a sudden crack in Italian morale. We have also taken into account two memoranda by the Prime Minister,§ a memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,‖ and one by the Secretary of State for India.¶

PART I.

ALLIED AIMS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

3. Communications prevent us from maintaining large forces in Southern Russia. It would be unwise to operate against Southern France except in conjunction with an offensive across the Channel, and very difficult to operate on any scale in the Balkans unless either Turkey comes into the war or Italy goes out of it.

If our African successes are to be exploited, we must therefore strike through Turkey or at Italy.

* C.O.S. (42) 176th Meeting (O). — 24
† C.O.S. (42) 354 (O). — 31
‡ C.O.S. (42) 179th Meeting (O). — 31
§ W.P. (42) 543 and 546.
‖ W.P. (42) 545.
¶ C.O.S. (42) 420 (O).

Policy towards Turkey.

4. Turkey's main aim is to keep out of the war until the last moment and build up her strength so that she can successfully oppose any Russian expansionist ambitions after the war.

The Prime Minister has recorded his opinion that Turkey may be won next summer if the proper measures are taken. The Foreign Office and Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee, however, both consider that there is no hope of inducing Turkey to abandon her neutrality in time for her to be of much direct assistance in the defeat of Germany. She may eventually come into the war, but not until Germany is on the verge of collapse.

Further Allied successes, such as the capture of Crete and the Dodecanese, would be more likely to exert a favourable influence on the Turks than any other action which we could take.

5. In the circumstances our best policy towards Turkey would be:—

(*a*) to make a display of force in the Eastern Mediterranean as soon as we can;

(*b*) to initiate fresh staff talks with the Turkish General Staff and supply Turkey with materials and equipment.

The extent of this supply must suffice at least to ensure the benevolent neutrality of Turkey so that she limits strictly her export of chrome to Germany.

Beyond this, further supply should depend on the progress of the staff talks and the development of Anglo-Turkish and Russo-Turkish relations. We should make it quite clear that we are not prepared to pay a high price in troops or materials for an article of which delivery is uncertain.

Policy towards Italy.

6. As regards Italy, there are two possible objects:—

(*a*) to bring about German occupation of Italy, thus directly increasing Germany's commitments—but retaining Italy as an antagonist; *or*

(*b*) to induce Italy to lay down her arms everywhere.

We make this distinction deliberately because our approach, particularly in the field of propaganda, will vary with the policy accepted.

7. From both the military and political points of view there is every advantage in aiming at course (*b*).

PART II.

METHODS TO BRING ABOUT THE COLLAPSE OF ITALY.

8. The courses of action which would contribute most effectively to the collapse of Italy are:—

(a) A Political Warfare Campaign.

The general lines have already been clearly indicated by the Prime Minister in W.P. (42) 546 and in his broadcast of the 29th November—no appeal and no promises to the Italian people, but warning of what is in store and the concentration of blame for Italian sufferings upon Mussolini and the Fascist régime. This agrees with the Foreign Secretary's view in W.P. (42) 545.

(b) The Bombing of Italy.

We may induce greater panic by a dispersal of effort over many towns than by concentration on a few. Whichever policy is adopted, bombing should initially at least be confined to towns which are ostensibly of military importance.

(c) Raids on the Italian Coast and Coastal Shipping.

Small commando raids on the Italian coast and harassing attacks by sea and air against the Italian coast and coastal shipping would produce military results out of proportion to the effort involved.

(d) The Capture of Sardinia and Sicily.

The capture of either might be the culminating blow leading to Italy's collapse. If we lose time at the beginning of 1943—a year of great possibilities—we shall not extend German forces in time to produce the greatest effect on operations on the Russian front in the spring; and we may miss valuable chances of further offensives before the winter sets in.

(e) Diversions in the Eastern Mediterranean.

When we are in occupation of the whole North African coast we shall be well placed for developing threats and deception plans in any quarter; for example, simultaneously with operations in the Central Mediterranean, we could build up a large deception plan against Crete and the Dodecanese.

(f) Increased Subversive Activities in the Balkans and Corsica.

We must give increased assistance to the insurgents in Yugoslavia and stimulate sabotage in Greece, since in both countries the garrisons are largely Italian. By subversive activity in Corsica we shall add to the burdens of the Italians, and may well make its occupation by us an easy matter at a later date.

(g) Action in the Balkans.

We should exploit to the full the existing internal and international dissensions in Bulgaria, Roumania and Hungary with a view to inducing them to recall their forces from Russia and occupied territories.

9. If these measures result in a request for an armistice, we would welcome the proposal, provided that:—

(*a*) Italy lays down her arms everywhere,
and

(*b*) that we obtain the necessary facilities in Sardinia, Sicily and possibly the heel of Italy, for further offensive thrusts.

Forces Available in the Mediterranean Theatre.

10. After consolidation of our positon in North Africa and after provision has been made for passing cargo shipping through the Mediterranean, the Allies will have sufficient resources in that theatre to carry out the above courses of action with the exception of (*d*). Vigorous offensive action will tend to release forces from security duties.

Our Resources a Governing Factor on our Major Strategy.

11. If we employ forces in excess of those which will be available within the Mediterranean area, the result will be to retard the build-up of forces in the United Kingdom for an eventual return to the Continent. This caveat applies with equal force to the availability of shipping and landing-craft. The benefits which we shall derive from undertaking fresh offensives in the Mediterranean must therefore be weighed carefully against the cost.

PART III.

ACTION TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF A COMPLETE ITALIAN COLLAPSE.

Importance of the Balkans.

12. In the event of an Italian collapse, our further action in the Mediterranean will be influenced by Germany's concentration and distribution of her forces in the theatre as a whole, and the intrinsic value of the Balkans to Germany. Whatever action the Germans may take, our main effort should be against the Balkans because :—

(*a*) We should obtain bases in Greece for air attack on Roumanian oilfields and refineries, and for fanning the already glowing embers of revolt in the Balkans.

(*b*) We should :—

(i) cut Axis sea communications between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea and thereby prevent the Axis from passing into the Black Sea the shipping which they urgently want to exploit their Russian gains;

(ii) be able to interrupt, and possibly cut, the Danube supply route to Germany;

(iii) create an additional potential threat to the German lines of communication to South Russia.

(*c*) The sources of raw materials in the Balkans (particularly chrome and copper) are vitally important to the Axis. The loss of these, together with the cutting of Axis sea communications in the Ægean on which the Axis supply of chrome from Turkey largely depends, would deprive Germany of almost all her sources of this indispensable product.

(*d*) It would go a long way to influence Turkey in our favour.

German Courses of Action.

13. Although Germany might with difficulty find the necessary air forces for their defence, she is not in a position to garrison both an Italy on the verge of collapse and the Balkans, without devastating results on the Russian front. To garrison both, she would need 20 to 30 additional divisions. To garrison the Balkans alone, she would need only 12 additional divisions.

14. The Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee consider* that in the last resort Germany would abandon Italy and concentrate on the Balkans and that to maintain her hold on the latter she would be prepared also to shorten her line in Russia.

While we agree with this view, the disadvantages to Germany are so obvious that we must also consider our own action in the event of Germany adopting the reverse policy of garrisoning Italy at the expense of the Balkans.

Courses of Action Open to United Nations.

15. In the following paragraphs we have assumed that Sardinia has already been captured.

ASSUMPTION A.—**(That the Germans abandon Italy.)**

16. In these circumstances we recommend the following line of action :—

(a) *Sicily.*—We should immediately occupy Sicily to secure the Mediterranean sea route if this has not already been done.

(b) *Italy.*—If peace with Italy becomes possible we must be careful in drawing up the terms to avoid any obligation for the defence and full occupation of Italy. We do not recommend full occupation on military grounds since :—

(i) it would entail a considerable liability for internal security;

* J.I.C. (42) 462, Final.

(ii) Italy is unsuitable as a base from which to invade Germany;

(iii) we should encounter insuperable difficulties in conducting operations against the enemy established in a strong, natural defensive position in the Alps, to which his communications would be short and easy, as against our long lines of sea communications.

(c) *Use of Italian Facilities.*—We shall, however, require to obtain from Italy facilities for furthering our campaign against Germany. It may be necessary to confine these to facilities in the heel of Italy for the development of air attack and threats against the Adriatic eastern seaboard and the west coast of Greece with the object of assisting a full-scale Balkan revolt.

(d) *Development of offensive in Balkans.*—Thereafter the road will be open for Allied operations in support of guerrilla activities on the Balkan mainland, either from the Adriatic seaboard or from the Ægean.

ASSUMPTION B.—**(That the Germans relax their grip on the Balkans.)**

17. In these circumstances our action should be guided by the extent to which we could pass cargo shipping through the Mediterranean. If the Germans were strongly established in Sicily and in a position to interfere with the through sea route, then we should have to consider the further action which we might take against Italy and Sicily, with a view to overcoming this interference. If, on the other hand, the Germans had only sufficient forces for maintaining internal security in Sicily then, on the assumption that we could pass cargo shipping through the Mediterranean, we recommend the following line of action :—

(a) *The Capture of Crete and the Dodecanese.* The Balkans will, in these circumstances, be the soft spot, and we must lose no time in seizing the outposts to them.

(b) *Further action in the Balkans.* The capture of Crete and the Dodecanese would open the way for further action with the object of securing air bases in Greece and bringing about a full-scale rising in the Balkans. For this purpose we should need :—

(i) to build up in the Middle East a supply of arms, equipment and food for despatch to Greece, Yugoslavia and Albania, together with a nucleus of specialist personnel;

(ii) to prepare to send, a soon as opportunity offers, a British force with a large air component from the Middle East to Salonica.

Effect of a German Attempt to Garrison both Italy and the Balkans.

18. If Hitler insists on garrisoning both Italy and the Balkans with German troops and air forces, the results on the Russian front will be incalculable—at the least a tremendous relief to Russia, and at the best a great stride along the road to complete German collapse.

CONCLUSIONS.

19. The prizes open to the Allies in the Mediterranean in 1943 are very great. They include the severe reduction of German air power, the reopening of the short sea route, the denial to Germany of oil, chrome and other minerals, the elimination of one of the Axis partners and the opening up of the Balkans.*

**Satellite Axis divisions on Russian front* :—

Italian 9.
Roumanian 18.
Hungarian 9.

Axis forces of occupation in the Balkans :—

Italian ~~22~~ 30.
Bulgarian 7.

21. If we decide to exploit the position which we have gained, our first object should be to induce the Italians to lay down their arms everywhere; our next thrust should be directed against the Balkans.

22. Unless Italy collapses far more quickly than we expect, this exploitation must, however, be at the expense of " Roundup " in 1943.

23. We are therefore faced with the alternatives of—

(a) Concentrating resources in the United Kingdom for a " Roundup " which may, in any event, be impracticable in 1943; and this at the cost of abandoning the great prizes open to us in the Mediterranean and of remaining inactive for many months during which Germany would recuperate; or

(b) Pursuing the offensive in the Mediterranean with the knowledge that we shall only be able to assault Northern France next year if there is a pronounced decline in German fighting power.

We cannot have it both ways. In our view (b) is the correct strategy and will give the Russians more certain, and possibly even greater, relief.

C. E. LAMBE.
G. M. STEWART.
R. E. VINTRAS.

Cabinet War Room,
December 5, 1942.

X Sent 9/12/42

Col Price.

76

COS(42) 428 (O) attached for covering note to P.M.

Major Vale of M.O.1. asks whether this paper is going to the P.A.O's. He suggests it would be of considerable assistance if it did.

A.C.S. 5/12.

X Let it go to PAO's

Spoke to Vale. Will let W.O have spare copies if QMG wants them

CRP 6/12

The circulation of this paper has been strictly limited. It is issued for the personal use of Brigadier Hollis.

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

Printed for the War Cabinet. December 1942.

MOST SECRET.

Copy No. 22

C.O.S. (42) 428 (O).

December 5, 1942.

TO BE KEPT UNDER LOCK AND KEY

It is requested that special care may be taken to ensure the secrecy of this document

WAR CABINET.

Chiefs of Staff Committee.

NORTH AFRICA AND LEVANT—REQUIREMENTS FOR SECURITY.

REPORT.

IN the attached estimate we set out the forces which we consider will be required to protect shipping in the Mediterranean and to provide for the security of the Mediterranean Littoral from Syria to French Morocco.

2. The proportion in which these forces will be provided by ourselves and by the Americans cannot be settled until our respective spheres of responsibility within the Mediterranean have been defined. In the meanwhile, we recommend that copies of this estimate should be sent to the Joint Staff Mission, for the information of the United States Chiefs of Staff, and to General Eisenhower, Admiral Cunningham and Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East, for their comments.

3. We ourselves have the following comments to make :—

(*a*) Experience may show that a night fighter squadron is required specifically for the defence of Algiers in addition to the estimated requirement of 6 squadrons which have been provisionally allotted as in *Appendix III*.

(*b*) We may have considerable difficulty in providing the requisite number of Torpedo-Fighter and Wellington L.L. squadrons.

(*c*) We should welcome early assistance from the United States in provision of A.A. units.

(Signed) A. F. BROOKE.
DUDLEY POUND.
C. PORTAL.

Offices of the War Cabinet, S.W. 1,
December 5, 1942.

ANNEX.

Assumptions.

1.—(*a*) Axis forces have been cleared from the whole of North Africa, but they retain the islands of Sardinia, Pantellaria, Sicily, Crete and the Dodecanese.

(*b*) An adequate force must be held available in North Africa for the occupation of Spanish Morocco against opposition if the necessity arises.

(*c*) French naval forces in Toulon, Alexandria and Dakar are immobilised.

Objects.

2.—(*a*) To protect shipping in the Mediterranean.

(*b*) To provide for internal security in the Mediterranean Littoral from Syria to French Morocco and for its defence against seaborne and air attack.

General Considerations.

3. Requirements in the Mediterranean cannot be considered purely in terms of defence. The provision of forces for offensive operations will not only provide a large measure of defence, but will materially affect the scale of attack which the enemy can bring to bear against us and his selection of objectives. Our assessment of defensive requirements is therefore subject to such modification as may result from the provision of forces for the offensive.

Enemy Courses of Action.

4. There is no likelihood of a major attack either by seaborne or airborne forces against North Africa, the Levant, Malta or Cyprus. The enemy could not have the protection of single-engine fighters, except in the neighbourhood of Cap Bon and Malta, and even a limited force of Allied aircraft would serve as a complete deterrent. Moreover, the Axis would have difficulty in providing the forces, assault shipping and escorts, and the Italians would not risk their mercantile marine on such ventures.

5. It is highly improbable that the major units of the Italian Fleet will take offensive action against either our shipping or our territory, in the face of shore-based aircraft. On the other hand, the Axis are likely to increase their submarine strength in the Mediterranean and to intensify E-boat and minelaying activities, particularly in the central area.

6. The Germans will probably increase their air forces in the area. It is estimated that, at the beginning of 1943, a force of 1,100 (950 first-line) German aircraft and 1,400 Italian aircraft, will be available. An estimate of their disposition is given in *Appendix I*, but this is largely dependent on the scale of attack which the Allies are themselves developing. While the enemy will in general try to conserve his air strength, his forces include some 360 German and 360 Italian long-range bombers, with which we must expect him to develop heavy scale air attacks against our convoys, ports and key points.

7. To summarise, the enemy may be expected to adopt a mainly defensive attitude in the Mediterranean, and, therefore, the potential threats against which we have to guard are—

(*a*) A German move into Spain, necessitating our entry into Spanish Morocco.

(*b*) Determined attacks against shipping, ports and key points.

(*c*) Sporadic raids by small forces.

The Attitude of the French in North Africa.

8. We cannot estimate at present how far the French civil administration and armed forces can be trusted to co-operate with the Allies. It seems reasonable to suppose that the civil administration will function normally and that the armed forces will, with Allied backing, be capable of ensuring internal security. Our estimate of forces required for the defence of French North Africa is based on this hypothesis.

9. Should the French forces desire to co-operate actively in the defence of their territory, they might take over the coast defences and a proportion of the anti-aircraft defences. In addition, some of the Allied field formations (except those earmarked for Spanish Morocco) might be replaced by French formations. This, however, could not be done immediately owing to the need for re-equipping and training. It would take some 6–9 months to reorganise and re-equip the present French forces on a fully mobile basis and to bring them up to the necessary standard of training. To produce any armoured formations would take twice as long.

Protection of Shipping.

10. Our shipping, together with the limited forces available for its protection, will be operating within range of enemy air atttack. Control of sea communications in the Mediterranean must therefore be achieved primarily through air power. We have based our estimate on a cycle of one 8½-knot convoy of 30 ships every 10 days each way. The sea time required for the passage from Gibraltar to Port Said at this speed would be about 11 days. If this flow of shipping can be achieved it will meet the present rate of military supply by cargo ship to the Middle East, Persia and India. The earlier convoys will, however, almost certainly have to be of smaller size.

Cover Forces.

11. Convoys in the Eastern Mediterranean will be adequately covered by the existing Mediterranean Fleet against attack by light surface forces. In addition, a cover force of the following order will be necessary against such attack in the Western Mediterranean :—

2 small cruisers.
4 Fleet destroyers,
8 Hunt-class destroyers.

Of these, the 8 Hunt class are already allocated to the Inshore Squadron, in the post-"Torch" period, but the remainder must be provided from other sources.

12. A summary of all naval forces required is given in *Appendix II*.

13. It must be emphasised that naval cover forces in the Mediterranean cannot be reduced to the above figures until shore-based air forces are installed and operating at the recommended strength. The proposed distribution places a smaller force in the Western Mediterranean in view of the better air cover which is available and the probable dispositions of the Italian Fleet. Moreover, reinforcements, if necessary, could more easily be sent from outside the Mediterranean to the western area. However, in order to use our forces to the best advantage, they must be regarded as a common pool.

Naval Escorts.

14. An escort of about 7 A/S Vessels, of which two must be fast, will be required with each convoy. To allow for refitting, boiler cleaning, &c., each group must therefore consist of 10 ships. Three groups will be needed between Gibraltar and Port Said, totalling about 9 Hunt-class destroyers and 21 corvettes. In addition, A/A ships and M.G.Bs. must reinforce in the areas particularly liable to attack, and local defence forces will be required to keep ports and channels clear.

Air Protection.

15. Fighter protection, both long-range and short-range, is necessary, particularly in areas where convoys must pass within range of enemy shore-based fighters. The fighter commitment necessary to meet this threat is estimated to be 24 squadrons of single-engine and 6 squadrons of long-range fighters.

A continuous anti-submarine escort of two aircraft by day and a continuous protective sweep by a Leigh light aircraft by night must be provided for each convoy.

The air forces required for the above, together with their suggested dispositions, are shown in *Appendix III* and *Map A*. These include torpedo bombers and G.R. aircraft, but not bombers, since the strength of the bomber forces will depend on offensive, rather than defensive, considerations.

Defence of Ports and Key Points.

16. The provision of fighter protection for the convoys will go far to provide fighter defence for the ports. In the case of the larger ports and key points, however, purely local defence fighters are required in addition. The number of squadrons and their dispositions must necessarily vary with the situation. It is considered that a general reserve of 21 fighter squadrons should provisionally be allocated as follows :—

Egypt	6 (including 2 Night (F) squadrons).
Palestine	2 (including Cyprus).
Tunisia	5 (including 2 Night (F) squadrons).
Malta	8 (including 2 Night (F) squadrons).

Coastal Defence Requirements.

17. The threat of naval bombardment is very small, and the Allied air force, together with the existing defences, supported by captured heavy guns, will prevent any attempt at even a cut-and-run raid at night.

18. Light batteries are required at all the main ports to guard against E-boats and midget submarines. The ports selected will be required as supply bases and convoy refuges and are shown in *Appendix IV*. Adequate defences could probably be improvised from Light A.A. and other guns captured recently. Excluding Malta, Alexandria and ports to the eastward, the defences of which are presumably adequate, but including Spanish Morocco, the total requirement is 25 batteries.

Anti-Aircraft Requirements.

19. It has been assumed that the defences in Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Malta are adequate to meet the scale of attack envisaged, and that requirements for airfield defences in Cyrenaica and Tripolitania can be met from Middle East resources. Details of the remaining anti-aircraft requirements are given in *Appendix V*. These amount to 504 Heavy A.A. guns and 1,038 Light A.A. guns, excluding those with formations, but including provision for operations in Spanish Morocco. The extent to which French A.A. units could be employed cannot be assessed at the present time.

Land Forces Required.

20. The tasks of the Allied forces will be to support the local forces, whether French or native, in their rôle of maintaining internal security, and also to deter the Axis from attempting seaborne raids. In addition, a separate force must be kept available for operations in Spanish Morocco should they become necessary.

21. The forces required are shown on *Map A* and amount to the equivalent of approximately 14 divisions. In certain areas the forces shown are less than those estimated by the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East,* who envisaged a stronger Axis threat.

22. If operations in Spanish Morocco become necessary there would probably not be any simultaneous threat against Tunisia. It should therefore be possible to reinforce French Morocco from Tunisia, if necessary.

* C.O.S. (42) 320 (O).

See A[POL/MIDEAST/1

APPENDIX I.

ESTIMATE OF GERMAN AND ITALIAN AIR FORCES AS AT THE BEGINNING OF JANUARY 1943.

German Air Force.

	S. France and Corsica.	Sicily and Sardinia.	Italy.	Eastern Mediterranean.	Total.
L.R.B.	...	270	...	90	360
B.B.	10	40	...	50	100
D.B.	30	90	...	30	150
S.E.F.	90	150	50	40	330
T.E.F.	10	50	40	20	120
A/C	...	...	10	...	10
Coastal	10	...	...	20	30
Total...	150	600	100	250	1,100*

* It is estimated that of the total force of 1,100 aircraft approximately 150 would be drawn from the R.T.U. organisation and be based mainly on S. France and Corsica. Thus the first line units in the Mediterranean area would amount to 950 aircraft.

Italian Air Force.

	S. France and Corsica.	Sicily and Sardinia.	Italy.	Eastern Mediterranean.	Total.
L.R.B.	...	180	110	70	360
D.B.	...	15	...	...	15
S.E.F.	50	200	250	100	600
A/C	50	30	90	50	220
Coastal	...	75	100	30	205
Total...	100	500	550	250	1,400

APPENDIX II.

SUMMARY OF NAVAL FORCES REQUIRED.

(*a*) As a cover force in the Eastern Mediterranean :—
- 6 Small cruisers.
- 8 Fleet destroyers.
- 8 Hunt destroyers.

(*b*) As a cover force in the Western Mediterranean :—
- 2 Small cruisers.
- 4 Fleet destroyers.
- 8 Hunt destroyers.

(*c*) For convoy escort inside the Mediterranean :—
- 3 Escort groups (9 Hunt destroyers and 21 Corvettes).

(*d*) For local defence in the Mediterranean :—
- 24 Fleet minesweepers.
- 56 "O" trawlers.
- 52 "L" trawlers.
- 27 A/S trawlers.
- 40 Small craft (to include M.G.Bs. and M.T.Bs.).

NOTE.—It must be emphasised that Naval Cover Forces in the Mediterranean cannot be reduced to the above figures until the shore-based air forces are installed and operating at the recommended strength. The two cover forces must be considered as forming a common pool.

APPENDIX III.

AIR FORCES FOR PROTECTION OF SHIPPING AND LOCAL DEFENCE.

[Calculations are based on British Establishments, *i.e.*, 16 or 12 I.E.]

	S.E.F.	T.E.F. (Day).	T.E.F. (Night).	Torpedo Fighter.	Torpedo Bomber.	G.R. Short Range.	Flying Boats (or L.R.G.R.).	Wellington (Leigh Light).	P.R.U.	Total.
Atlantic Seaboard...	Provided by existing Gibraltar Command.									...
Morocco and Algeria	9	2	...	2	1	2	1	1	...	18
Tunisia	7 3(R)	1	2(R)	...	...	1	1	1	½(T.E.)	16½
Malta...	6(R)	...	2(R)	2	1	...	...	...	½(T.E.)	11½
Tripolitania ...	...	2	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	3
Cyrenaica	8	1	...	2	1	2	1	1	½(S.E.)	16½
Egypt	4(R)	...	2(R)	...	...	...	1	1	...	8
Palestine, Cyprus, Syria	2(R)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Total Squadrons ...	24 15(R)	6	6(R)	6	3	6	4	4	1½	75½
Total Aircraft ...	624	96	96	96	48	96	48	64	24	1,192

(R) = Part of General Reserve of Defensive Fighters (15 (Day) and 6 (Night) (F) Squadrons) for allocation as required.

APPENDIX IV.

ANTI-M.T.B. COAST DEFENCE BATTERIES REQUIRED.

Tobruk	2
Benghazi	2
Tripoli	2
Sfax	1
Sousse	1
Tunis	2
Bizerta	2
Bone	1
Bougie	1
Algiers	2
Oran	2
Casablanca	2
	20
In addition, if Spanish Morocco has to be occupied :—	
Melilla	1
Ceuta	2
Tangier	2
	5
Total	25

APPENDIX V.

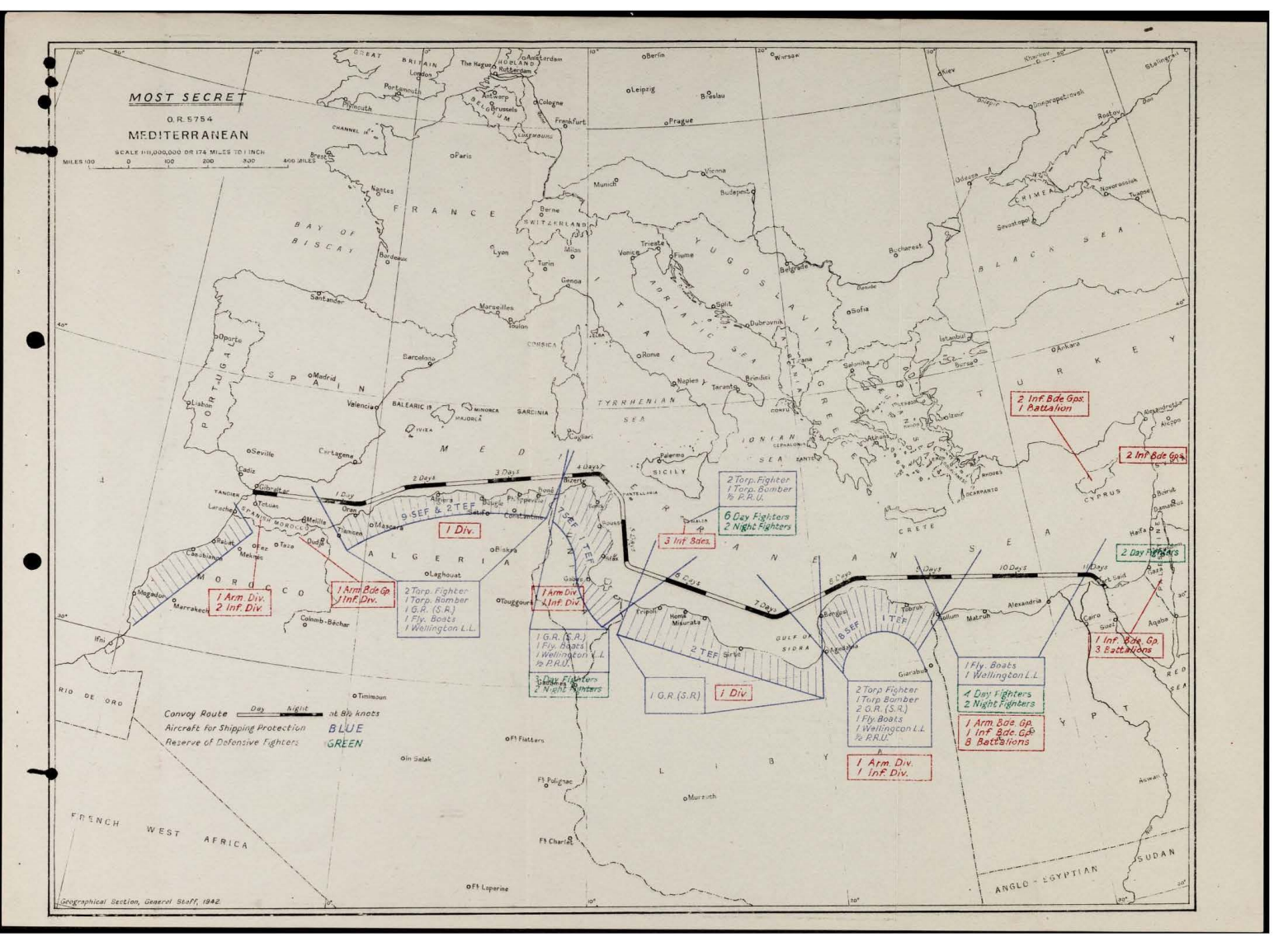
ANTI-AIRCRAFT REQUIREMENTS.

	Heavy Guns.	*Light Guns.*	
Ports—			
Tobruk	24	36	} Middle East Estimate.*
Benghazi	24	36	
Tripoli	24	36	
Sfax	8	12	
Sousse	16	24	
Tunis	24	36	
Bizerta	24	36	
Bone	16	24	
Bougie	16	24	
Algiers	24	36	
Oran	16	24	
Casablanca	8	12	
	224	336	
Airfields—			
25 airfields in French North Africa	100	300	
L. of C.—			
In Cyrenaica and Tripolitania	16	72	Middle East Estimate.*
In Tunisia and Algeria	48	108	
Total	388	816 =	48¼ Brit. Hy. A.A. Btys. 45½ „ Lt. „ „

In addition, if Spanish Morocco has to be occupied :—

Ports—			
Oran (additional)	8	12	
Melilla	8	12	
Ceuta	16	24	
Tangier	24	36	
Casablanca (additional)	16	24	
Airfields—			
5 in Spanish Morocco	20	60	Includes Tetuan town.
L. of C.—			
In French and Spanish Morocco	24	54	
Total	116	222	
Grand Total	504	1,038 =	63 Brit. Hy. A.A. Btys. 57⅜ „ Lt. „ „

* C.O.S. (42) 320 (O).


MOST SECRET
O.R.5754
MEDITERRANEAN
SCALE 1:11,000,000 OR 174 MILES TO 1 INCH
MILES 100 0 100 200 300 400 MILES
GREAT BRITAIN
London
Portsmouth
Plymouth
HOLLAND
The Hague
Amsterdam
Rotterdam
BELGIUM
Antwerp
Brussels
Ostend
CHANNEL IS.
Cologne
Frankfurt
Leipzig
Berlin
Breslau
Prague
Warsaw
Kiev
Stalingrad
Dnepropetrovsk
Rostov
Don
Paris
Brest
Nantes
FRANCE
BAY OF BISCAY
Bordeaux
Munich
Vienna
Budapest
Berne
SWITZERLAND
Lyon
Turin
Milan
Venice
Trieste
Fiume
YUGOSLAVIA
Belgrade
Danube
Bucharest
Odessa
CRIMEA
Novorossisk
Taganrog
Sevastopol
BLACK SEA
Santander
Marseilles
Toulon
Genoa
ADRIATIC SEA
Split
Dubrovnik
Sofia
Istanbul
Bursa
Ankara
TURKEY
Oporto
PORTUGAL
Madrid
SPAIN
Barcelona
Lisbon
Valencia
BALEARIC IS
MINORCA
MAJORCA
SARDINIA
TYRRHENIAN SEA
Rome
Naples
Taranto
Brindisi
CORFU
Salonika
Izmir
Alexandretta
Aleppo
Seville
Cartagena
Cadiz
Gibraltar
TANGIER
Tetuan
Larache
SPANISH MOROCCO
Melilla
Oran
Mascara
Algiers
Bougie
Ft. Gueydon
Philippeville
Constantine
Setif
Bone
Tripoli
Benghazi
Tobruk
Derna
Bardia
Sollum
Matruh
Alexandria
Cairo
Suez
Aqaba
Haifa
Beirut
Damascus
CYPRUS
RHODES
SCARPANTO
CRETE
Palermo
SICILY
Cagliari
Trapani
Marsala
Pantelleria
Sousse
Kelibia
Sfax
Gabes
Tripoli
Homs
Misurata
Sirte
GULF OF SIDRA
Gazala
Tobruk
Bomba
Derna
Barce
Benghazi
Agedabia
Giarabub
Msus
Timimoun
Ft Flatters
In Salak
Ft Polignac
Murzuch
Ft Charlet
Ft Lamy
Ft Laperine
Laghouat
Touggourt
Biskra
Colomb-Béchar
Ifni
Mogador
Marrakech
Casablanca
Rabat
Fez
Taza
Mekinez
Tlemcen
Dublis
MOROCCO
ALGERIA
LIBYA
EGYPT
SUDAN
ANGLO-EGYPTIAN
FRENCH WEST AFRICA
RIO DE ORO
RED SEA
Aswan
Suez Canal
Convoy Route Day Night at 8½ knots
Aircraft for Shipping Protection BLUE
Reserve of Defensive Fighters GREEN
1 Arm. Div.
2 Inf. Div.
1 Arm. Bde Gp.
1 Inf. Div.
9 SEF & 2 TEF
1 Div.
2 Torp. Fighter
1 Torp. Bomber
1 G.R. (S.R.)
1 Fly. Boats
1 Wellington L.L.
1 Day
2 Days
3 Days
4 Days
5 Days
6 Days
7 Days
8 Days
9 Days
10 Days
11 Days
3 SEF
1 TEF
2 TEF
1 Arm Div.
1 Inf. Div.
1 G.R. (S.R.)
1 Fly. Boats
1 Wellington L.L.
½ P.R.U.
3 Day Fighters
2 Night Fighters
3 Inf. Bdes.
2 Torp. Fighter
1 Torp. Bomber
½ P.R.U.
6 Day Fighters
2 Night Fighters
1 G.R. (S.R.)
1 Div.
2 Torp. Fighter
1 Torp. Bomber
2 G.R. (S.R.)
1 Fly. Boats
1 Wellington L.L.
½ P.R.U.
1 Arm. Div.
1 Inf. Div.
1 Fly. Boats
1 Wellington L.L.
4 Day Fighters
2 Night Fighters
1 Arm. Bde Gp.
1 Inf. Bde. Gp.
8 Battalions
2 Inf. Bde Gps.
1 Battalion
2 Inf. Bde Gps.
2 Day Fighters
1 Inf. Bde. Gp.
3 Battalions
Geographical Section, General Staff, 1942

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3RD DECEMBER, 1942

WAR CABINET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

ALLIED STRATEGY - MEMORANDUM BY GENERAL SIKORSKI

Note by the Secretary.

The Prime Minister has directed that the attached memorandum+ and covering letter✓ from General Sikorski shall be circulated for consideration by the Chiefs of Staff, with particular reference to the points made in the covering letter on

(a) the use of the Polish First Army Corps, and

(b) the request for the return to this country of the 5,000 men urgently needed for the Polish Air Force, Paratroop Brigade and Armoured Division.

(Signed) L.C. HOLLIS

Offices of the War Cabinet,
S.W.1.
3rd December, 1942.

\+ Annex II
✓ Annex I

ANNEX I

REPUBLIC OF POLAND

November 17th, 1942.

PRIME MINISTER

My dear Prime Minister,

According to precedents which I have followed and which you were kind enough to accept, I have the honour of submitting to you an estimate of the military situation with my opinion on its future possibilities of development. It is set out in general terms, but the alternatives of the offensive action of which I am speaking in the enclosed Memorandum are being worked out now in detail.

2. I am sending another copy of the above Memorandum to President Roosevelt with whom I shall discuss it personally during my visit in Washington. I should be very grateful if you could find time to look over this Memorandum before I meet you on the 19th of November, when I should appreciate very much your opinion on the subject.

3. On the margin of this Memorandum I would like to attract your attention to the Balkans. Even in the case the Germans would desist in the coming year from offensive action on other fronts and turned to defensive tactics, they may try to strike out from the Balkan area in the direction of Turkey and Persia in the pursuit of oil. In any case, I think it reasonable to take into consideration the possibility of the occupation by them of Thrace which would aim at obstructing the eventual invasion of the continent by the Allies across the straits.

4. In the expectation of decisive action on the continent in 1943, I would like to make it clear that all the existing Polish Fighting Forces desire to take part in them. At that time, as shown by the enclosed Memorandum, the problem of employing the Polish Forces in Scotland may be still not clear. For a direct action in Poland I would like to reserve only the Paratroop Brigade and a major part of the Polish Air Force. The Polish First Army Corps, however, ought to be present wherever decisive action will be undertaken. Were it to take place in the Mediterranean theatre of war operation, the said Corps should be transferred together with a part of the Polish Air Force to the Middle East. In this event, I would take over the command of the whole of the Polish Fighting Forces in those parts. I would like to point out that the transportation of the Polish troops should be terminated some six weeks before the beginning of the action, so as to allow time to get used to new conditions.

5. I venture once more to ask you to have instructions issued to hasten the bringing over from under command of General Maitland Wilson to this country the 5,000 men who are so urgently needed here for the complement of our Air Force, Paratroop Brigade and the Armoured Division, and which form the remaining part of those men to the sending of which we agreed in talks with you and General Sir Alan Brooke.

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed) SIKORSKI.

P.S. In accordance with the news which reaches me, I allow myself to draw your attention to the re-grouping of German troops which is taking place in the Balkans and which is directed towards Greece. These troops could turn towards the Middle East, in the event of the Middle East being stripped of sufficient forces to defend it.

The Rt.Hon.Winston S. Churchill, CH.MP.
Prime Minister

ANNEX II

ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION AND POSSIBILITIES OF ACTION

In spite of carefully prepared positions, the German and Italian resistance broke down under the attack of the VIIIth Army in Libya. The ultimate defeat of General Rommel's forces appears certain. Owing to the diminishing resisting power of the German armies this success will be repeated on other fronts wherever the spirit of initiative is supported by efficient leadership and the latest military weapons. Although Russia is persisting in her stubborn defence with such great determination, it is unlikely that similar success will be achieved there.

2. The most important factor rightly applied by the Americans and the British in North Africa on November 8th, was that of surprise. In planning the further course of the war this factor must play a great part. Hitler may attempt to annihilate the countries under his control before he himself is defeated. It will, therefore, become increasingly imperative in the future co-ordinate efforts which must march hand in hand with speed and surprise, applied by the Allies with the same deadly logic as it is by the Germans.

Results achieved by the Germans in 1942

3. During 1942, the German campaign in the East no longer showed the same drive. Begun rather late, probably on account of transport difficulties, it was slowed down by the Russian counter-attack on Kharkov.

4. The sequence of German effort (first Kerch, then Sebastopol and, ultimately, the onslaught on Voronez, the Caucasus and Stalingrad) as well as the restricted front of the attack indicate a drop in German offensive possibilities, as compared with last year's.

5. Had the German offensive followed, as previously, a lightning course, the Germans might have reached the Volga in the region of Stalingrad in order subsequently to attack Moscow from the rear or to capture the whole of the Caucasus. From the Caucasus they might have developed at a later time an offensive against the Middle East. The Germans failed to achieve these objectives.

6. Russia managed to save her armies but, by losing her most important industrial region on the Don, her most fertile agricultural areas in the Ukraine and Kuban, and by allowing her vital southern route of supplies for war material and petrol to be partially cut off, has distinctly lowered her war potential and weakened dangerously her national economy. She is now restricted to the output of her two remaining industrial bases:- that of Moscow and of the Ural. The food situation has accordingly worsened. It is likely, however, that with material support of the Allies Russia will endure the coming winter and will be ready by the spring of 1943 to continue her defence. She may even manifest some activity during the winter months by taking advantage of being better prepared than the Germans for campaigning in the severe climate. The Germans are afraid of the Russian forces concentrated in the northern and central sectors of the front, which the Germans had not succeeded in drawing southwards while attacking Stalingrad.

7. In the second theatre of operations, i.e. in Libya the superiority of the Axis is finished. The Germans have failed to shake the vital Allied centre, the Middle East - a result which might have been achieved by successful drives from the Suez and from the Caucasus.

8. The slowing down of tempo and drive of German operations during the current year was accompanied by the weakening of their position in the air. The Allies profiting by this fact staged a series of large-scale raids, which lowered the war production of the Third Reich and shook the self-confidence of the German people, intoxicated by victories gained so far.

9. It should be remembered, however, that the Germans have maintained throughout the year a complete freedom of operations on their internal lines against any one adversary.

What are the further possibilities of German action.

10. It is unlikely that the Germans will develop extensive winter operations in Russia in the near future as this would involve too heavy losses. One should not, however, exclude the possibilities of a number of surprise moves and attacks with limited objectives as their aim. It is difficult to take seriously Russian declarations concerning their counter-attack of a decisive importance.

11. On the Russian front, therefore, it may be expected that the Red Army will continue to bind the major part of the German forces. The transfer of these forces to the West and South can now be observed after the defeat of Rommel's army and the Allied attack on North Africa.

12. For the moment, the Germans have replied to this attack by occupying the so-called "free" part of France and her Mediterranean ports, sharing the booty with Italy. This should at last rouse the French people. The occupation of France might be a preliminary step to further operations. The Allies should therefore follow carefully developments in Spain, as an occupation of that country together with her ports, the Balearic Islands and her African possessions, would be of capital importance to Germany.

13. The second alternative would be an attack on Turkey in order to oust her from the Balkan Peninsula so as to deprive the Allies of their possible debouches to the Balkans.

14. Both actions, in Spain as well as in Turkey, would probably encounter armed resistance and would prove beyond Hitler's possibilities.

WHAT WILL BE THE GERMAN OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR 1943.

Germany on the offensive

15. It is doubtful whether in the spring of 1943, the Germans will attempt for the third time an offensive operation against Russia, though limited in time and space, in order to force a decision in this theatre of war. Their aims in the East will remain the same, i.e. the occupation of Baku, the capture of Moscow, Leningrad and the cutting off of the northern supply route in the region of Vologda. Should they

try to realize these aims, they would do so in succession. We may assume as certain that powerful German offensives, undertaken simultaneously in several operational directions, are a thing of the past. In addition each further move which draws the German armies further east, elongates their lines of communications which are an essential factor in Hitler's game, based on internal lines, in a manner increasingly dangerous to them.

16. After the German defeat in Libya, it is unlikely that the Germans may present serious danger in the Middle East in 1943; an attack on Iran-Iraq, directed from the Caucasus alone would prove too risky considering that Russia remains undefeated.

17. An invasion of Great Britain appears improbable to-day, owing to the German loss of air supremacy and the great strength of British defences. Caution, however, dictates taking into account this eventuality.

Germany on the defensive

18. Should Hitler and his Staff reach the conclusion that a total German victory is definitely impossible and that it cannot be achieved by further offensive operations, he may decide to pass to the defensive on all fronts on the Continent, adapted for the purpose and adequately consolidated.

19. In passing to the defensive the Germans would endeavour to create such conditions as would convince the Allied that further bloodshed in a protracted war is useless. This would be used as an inducement to the Allies to suspend military operations and to seek a compromise peace based on international agreement.

20. German propaganda will then do its utmost to convince public opinion in the Allied countries that this solution only can save western civilisation - presumably defended by the Germans. By using the bogey of a Bolshevized Europe the Germans will simultaneously attempt to find, at all costs, supporters of the "New Order" in the Pan-Europa under their rule.

WHAT METHODS ARE THE GERMANS LIKELY TO USE IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS AIM.

21. Their first objective will be to prevent the Allies from attacking on two fronts. To-day this is no longer possible. This purpose may have been achieved on condition that the Allies were ousted from the Mediterranean and the Middle East and that Russia's military power was broken in 1943 - this now appears totally unlikely.

22. A switching over to the defensive, with a possible shortening of the eastern front, would allow the Germans to organize the exploitation of the captured "Lebensraum", which would cover all the requirements of a long war, by supplying them with Russian wheat, coal, iron and, partly, petrol. In this manner they intend to exploit the factor of time, which at present is working against the Axis.

23. The tremendous German investment in the territories captured from Russia, precludes any chances of a compromise peace between the Third Reich and Soviet Russia. Hitler cannot give up the raw materials and agricultural produce of the Ukraine already largely reorganized by the Germans - neither can Stalin cede these territories to Germany without condemning the people of Great Russia to a permanent famine,

24. The interruption of intensive offensive operations will reduce the losses and the wear and tear of war equipment; this would allow the Germans to master the approaching crisis in manpower in the German army and to improve German transport conditions.

25. By withdrawing from the eastern front considerable forces of first class fighting value (approximately 50 divisions) and transferring them to the West and to the centre of the Reich, the Germans would be able to create good defensive conditions, especially in the West. This would be an important argument demonstrating to the Allies the hopelessness of seeking a decision in this war by attacking Germany from the West. The Germans would endeavour to spread and deepen this feeling of despondency among the Allies by severe submarine warfare and the destruction of shipping.

26. In order to lower the hopes of the Allied nations in the efficacy of their air operations over Germany, the Germans may concentrate the Luftwaffe in mass attacks against Great Britain. In spite of extensive war weariness, one should reckon with serious German air attacks on Great Britain even during the approaching winter and this in spite of the extended range of the Luftwaffe's operations caused by the African offensive. If there are no decisive operational moves on the part of the Allies the Germans, by extending the war into one of mutual attrition, will do their utmost to achieve a so-called compromise peace.

27. Considerable assistance in achieving this aim would be provided if the attention of the U.S.A. could be distracted from Europe to the Pacific. Here Japan can play an important role and particularly as she is most successful in her own methods of warfare. In my opinion, Japan's aggression against Russia would not be justified from an operational point of view. It is more likely that her activities will be concentrated on containing the Allied forces in the Pacific which are already seriously engaged in this part of the world. Moreover, the maintenance of "neutral" relations with Russia may serve Japanese political interests in the future.

28. Finally it should be stated that the danger of a new campaign in Russia, the air raids on German cities and the Allied offensives in North Africa favour the apparently increasing development of opposition not only within Germany but also fosters it in satellite countries such as Finland, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria and, above all in Italy. Information I am receiving from various quarters, and especially from Rome, indicates the acute internal crisis threatening Italy. One of the main tasks of the Allies in their struggle for victory is now to increase this state of mind and to exploit it methodically.

THE ALLIED PLAN OF ACTION - ESTIMATE OF POSSIBILITIES

29. The thesis that a long protraction of the war will eventually lead to the exhaustion of German resources and that victory can be won without decisive and aggressive operations is not to be contemplated under any conditions. This thesis is rejected by the Allies and by statesmen who are responsible for conducting the war. To think otherwise would be to commit a capital blunder which would give us now, as it did in the last war, a half-hearted victory fruitless in its ultimate consequences. It should be borne in mind, therefore, that no air activity, conducted

even on the largest scale, or any speculation as to the breakdown of the morale of the war-weary German people can deviate the Allies from an attack with all the forces at their disposal against the heart of Germany.

30. Mass air-raids on Germany and Italy bring about dire results for the Axis. They should be continued with utmost energy, but they should be regarded as a mere preparation for the actual decisive offensive. It is quite possible that the Germans will suddenly realize the danger of such an offensive, the results of which they will be unable to master, and may have recourse to some political subterfuge in order to find a way of escape.

31. Should they succeed in this the most terrible war in history would be lost and the boundless sacrifices of the nations which rose in arms against the Germans would be wasted. The peace following it would again be a mere armistice, possibly shorter than the last one.

32. The planning of a decisive attack which is at the same time the best form of defence, must not be influenced by popular clamour.

33. It would be disastrous to confuse political issues with operational aims. An offensive on the Continent should not, however, be delayed too long because of the situation in Russia and the martyrdom of the nations under the German yoke. The strength of resistance of the oppressed peoples is an extremely valuable asset. If strained too long it might be reduced to a minimum.

34. The Germans are doing their utmost to lower the resistance of the oppressed peoples by impressing on them the futility of the unending struggle. Highly significant moves of this kind may be observed even in Poland.

35. Judging the situation from this point of view, quickening up the tempo of the war should be regarded by the Allies as an imperative necessity.

36. It would be a distinct disadvantage towards winning the war, if the U.S.A. Government, should regard Japan as enemy No. 1. This would be contrary to the fundamental principle that attack should be concentrated against that particular adversary whose destruction overthrows entire defensive fabric of the enemy.

37. Germany is and will remain humanity's principal enemy. It is against Germany that the forces of the Allies must - above all - be concentrated. The smashing of Germany will bring in its wake the downfall of the other Axis powers - Italy, although overrun by the Germans may break away from the Reich as soon as she perceives the imminent defeat of Germany. The war with Japan will be much easier to settle after Germany's defeat. It is the battle of the Atlantic and the Mediterranean and not the battle of the Pacific, as well as the closest collaboration of Great Britain and the U.S.A. in the destruction of the German and Italian sea-power, that will decide the issue.

WHERE AND WHEN TO ATTACK

38. There will be two main concentrations of the German armies - one in the east, the other in the west. To penetrate between them, separate them and defeat them separately, one after the other appears to be the right guiding principle, particularly if we consider the relative strength of the Allies and Germany in 1943. The opportunity to realize this will exist so long as there are two fronts, and for this reason the time when this attack takes place will be of particular importance for the outcome of these operations.

39. The separation of the German forces can be achieved from two directions:-

- from the north:- through the North Sea, via Hamburg, in the direction of Berlin,

- from the south:- through the Balkans, or through Italy. //

40. The northern direction may yield great results. It is directed at the very heart of Germany and it permits the Allies to avoid the two main defensive barriers offered by the Rhine and the Siegfried Line. At the same time it would provide a decisive blow against the whole German system of occupation.

41. There are two essential difficulties which render doubtful the practicability of this strategy. One of them is the large amount of shipping necessary to cover the considerable distance by sea, the other is the distance from air bases which renders difficult, or even, impossible, the support of fighter air-craft, the range of which is so far inadequate. Both these difficulties are even more obvious when compared with the facility with which the Germans can concentrate their forces for battle in this direction, and in view of the fact that German A.A. defence in these regions is the strongest. The Allies would, therefore, be forced to engage considerable air and naval forces in order to obtain the necessary ascendancy.

42. An attack in the Hamburg - Berlin direction must be protected on both flanks:-

- in the south by containing German forces in France,

- in the north by overwhelming German air and naval forces operating from the bases in southern Norway.

43. The first objective could be achieved by an attack on northern France and Belgium, the second objective - either by an earlier occupation of southern Norway, which might involve considerable losses, or by a combined naval and air operation directed against the German naval bases and aerodromes in Norway.

44. The southern direction via Italy, viewed as a road to Germany, is long and the terrain will remain difficult, for two barriers would have to be overcome, i.e. the sea and the debouches from northern Lombardy to central Europe.

45. The other road from the south leads through the Balkans. Operations organized here, and provided with well-developed bases in the Middle East, will bring the Allies to the Rumanian oil fields, which are vital to the German interests, and the capture of which would deprive the Germans of one of their main assets in their arguments concerning their alleged invincibility. Even comparatively small forces used in this route, which would pass through Allied countries, such as Greece and Yugoslavia, or through countries quarreling with each other such as Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary, might penetrate fairly easily. An attack from the Balkans coinciding with an armed rising in Poland, and subsequently supported by Czechoslovakia, would completely separate the German forces and cut off from Germany the armies fighting in Russia. There can be no doubt about the huge operational advantages of an attack in this direction. The difficulties, however, should not be underrated.

46. The massing of forces would be difficult. For this reason an indispensable condition for starting any operations from the south is the clearance of North Africa by gaining control over the Mediterranean. This necessity, as a matter of fact, comes to the fore as the initial stage in every plan of operations against Germany. The shortening of supply lines will lead to an economy in shipping. Furthermore, the clearance of North Africa will greatly influence the situation in France and Italy. Under no circumstances should the initiative grasped by the Allies in North Africa be relinguished.

47. The difficulties of massing forces for an attack from the south could be overcome to a large extent in the event of Turkey joining the Allies. This eventuality cannot be ruled out, given favourable developments in the Mediterranean, and a careful political preparation undertaken in good time to which certain Allied Governments now in exile might contribute. Russia could play the most important part here by guaranteeing Turkey's territorial integrity and giving up her claims to the Straits. An essential influence on Turkey's attitude will be exerted by Russia's being able to hold on to the Caucasus, the clearing of North Africa of Axis forces, and Turkey being invited to co-operate in post-war arrangements. Turkey's conciliatory attitude towards the U.S.S.R. is noticeable to-day.

48. The only problems left would be those of the transfer of troops from North Africa to the Balkans, and the problem of air support.

49. The easiest solution of the first problem leads undoubtedly through Turkey, the other through Italy via Yugoslavia, the third, presenting the greatest difficulties due to the terrain, straight through Greece.

50. The second problem, that of air support, is rendered more complicated because the main operational base of the air forces is Great Britain. It is on the Great Britain and the U.S.A., or Canada, route that the air forces are now complemented. The regroupment of the air power in another region is, therefore, a much more difficult operation for Great Britain than it is for Germany. In order to achieve it, at a point where the operations require it - in this case in the south - it is desirable that the Great Britain - France - North Africa route should be created, i.e. that France should, once again, be brought into active co-operation. A successful landing, coincident with a rising in France would help to realise this plan.

51. The preparation for operations from the south requires obviously absolute security in the Middle East. The Suez and the Caucasus area must be covered. With regard to Suez, security is assured by the present vistory in Libya which, in conjunction with the occupation of North Africa, should lead to its complete clearance. With regard to the Caucasus direction, the defence of the southern Cuacasus is the main issue. Any menace to northern Iraq (oil fields) must be prevented. To that effect Russian, British and Polish forces should co-operate under a common unified command.

52. Should the Germans, for instance, succeed in the near future in penetrating southwards through the Caucasus, it might lead, in view of the lack of co-ordination, to a successive, instead of a simultaneous, engagement first of the Russian forces in the Caucasus and then of the Polish-British forces in N.W. Iran.

53. Conditions of attack in the West, on the Franco-Belgian front are most favourable from the point of view of air support and shipping. It is difficult to foretell what the result of such an operation is likely to be. This will contain the Germans in the West, giving the Allies the chance of intensifying the action of their own air forces with a simultaneous reduction of the danger of reprisals by the German air forces against Great Britain.

54. The chances of exploiting this direction of attack in depth are very poor and for this reason this particular direction of attack is the least profitable. It is indispensible, however, and of a very great operational significance, were it only as a transitory phase, which might lead to incalculable advantages of a general nature.

T o s u m u p :-

55. An attack from the south, through the Balkans, would be most profitable. It is difficult to assess its practicability without having an exact knowledge of the strength of the available forces, or of the conditions of their concentration. //

56. The initial operation necessary for all the alternatives under discussion - must be the clearance of North Africa and the full re-establishment of communications across the Mediterranean. The time needed for this operation may take several months counting from the beginning of the offensive in Libya and from the moment of Allied landings in Algiers, Tunisia and Morocco.

57. The next stage should consist in containing the German forces in the West by striking at northern France. It should be carried out at a fairly early date, so as not to abandon the Russian armies to their difficulties, i.e. by the spring 1943 at the latest; at the time when activities are resumed in the east.

58. The third decisive stage of attack will depend first of all on the concentration of adequate forces and transport - this applies equally to invasion through the Balkans as to the invasion of Berlin via the North Sea. It would be most profitable for the outcome of the war if before the winter of 1943-44, the German armies in Russia were faced with a disaster of a retreat, enforced by a threat of the severance of the communications with the Reich. To achieve this the attack from the south should materialize in the summer of

1943. The part played by the secret military organization in Poland, which is continuously carrying out important diversive action and which is already prepared to cut off completely, at the proper time, communications linking the eastern front with the Reich, has been fully recognized by the appropriate departments of the British Government which are collaborating with us.

59. The role of the occupied countries.

There are four essential groups of occupied (Allied) countries which are in a position to play an important role in the operations planned:-

- the western group:- France - Belgium - Holland,
- the Balkan group:- Greece - Yugoslavia - Albania,
- the central group:- Poland - Czechoslovakia,
- the fourth group:- Scandinavia; the importance of the latter would come to the fore should the transport conditions by sea and air permit a deep outflanking of the Germans from the north.

60. In every occupied country, though in varying degrees, there exists an indestructable power arising from the love of freedom. It is based on the desire for revenge and the right of exact justice for the infinite wrongs, atrocities and humiliations endured. It is so dynamic a power that it can replace that of regular armies incomparably better equipped and organized. It is imperative, for operational purposes, to prepare and plan the exploitation of the retaliation of the oppressed peoples. Unco-ordinated, their reactions might undermine the confidence of the peoples in the Allies, and cause heavy and useless sacrifices.

61. There are two essential tasks connected with the expected operations on the Continent to be performed by the occupied countries:-

- the first one is to start active warfare in the rear of the German armies closely co-ordinated with the operations of the Allied armies,

- the second one is to reconstruct, as quickly as possible, the national armed forces which will protect their respective lands.

62. Another service no less important than military operations, which can be rendered by the oppressed peoples is to prepare the ground for the collapse of German morale. For this purpose it is essential to make full use of the masses of alien workers - men and women - forcibly deported into Germany.

63. The moment when open warfare is undertaken will depend on the geographical position of the occupied countries in relation to the point from which the planned Allied operations will start.

64. The western and Balkan groups will co-operate in the first stage in the establishing of bridgeheads on the Continent.

65. The central group will take up the proper attack on the German rear at the moment when an armed rising of the population will have real chances of success. Until such a time, diversive operations of varying military importance may be organised there.

66. The armed rising of the occupied countries must be considered by the Allied High Command in relation to the air force, their most powerful fighting instrument. The air force is not only able to spread destruction inside Germany, but it can bring into action in the German rear whole tactical or even operational groups. Thanks to airborne troops, it is possible at present to carry the battle far into enemy territory, this forming the highest achievement of modern methods of attack. The co-ordination of air operations with the armed risings of the conquered nations may yield very serious results which cannot be anticipated as yet.

67. The effort which must be made in this respect exceeds the present possibilities of Great Britain which is entirely engrossed in the production of air force equipment. It should be undertaken first of all by the U.S.A. It would seem right to think that the U.S.A. would find it more expedient to create several air-borne units, to send them into action on the Continent, and to develop air transport than to organise cumbersome, specialised land forces and ship them to Europe. The effect of operations carried out by air-borne troops in conjunction with the conflagration started within the German occupied territories might yield results out of all proportion with the initial investment.

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68. Finally, I should like to stress that by changing radically their present tactics and passing over to the defensive, the Germans will have to face the disadvantages of this policy. It is true that they already try to explain to their people that the Blitzkrieg was abandoned merely because they wished to avoid further bloodshed. Nevertheless, they are fully aware of the fact that a war deprived of further political aims, a war which has led to no decision as yet and has placed them on top of a volcano, might easily prove disastrous. They will, therefore, do their utmost to undermine the mutual confidence of the Allies, and set the United Nations at variance. (Frederic the Great followed the same reasoning, when during the 7-years war he entrenched himself in Blausewitz until the Coalition against him fell apart).

69. Our main task is to maintain and strengthen the morale and the political unity of the Allies, based on the mutual understanding of the common needs and the unconditional recognition of the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the countries forming the Great Coalition. Every intentional misinterpretation of the Atlantic Charter, as well as any arguments in favour to the annexation by force of foreign territories on the plea that it is the alleged will of the population, must cease.

70. The other, very urgent task, is the maximum co-ordination of war production and the unification of strategy. The latter should be achieved by the organising of a common command to direct the current and future war operations as a whole in conjunction with the co-operation which can be provided by the organised forces in the occupied countries. It cannot be denied that an absolutely uniform direction of operations on the Axis side has largely contributed to their success up till the

present and it is a factor which should be eliminated as soon as possible.

71. After straightening these problems, we will be able to undertake a decisive counter-action on the Continent and thus quicken the harmonious rhythm of the war and defeat the enemy sooner than it recently may have appeared possible.

(Signed) SIKORSKI.
Prime Minister
and Commander-in-Chief.

London, 16th October - 10th November, 1942.

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 333rd Meeting

Held on 2nd December 1942

2. PROGRAMME FOR DEVELOPMENT OF AIRFIELDS IN NORTH AFRICA.

THE COMMITTEE referred to a telegram (J.S.M.508 - 10) from Washington asking for our programme for the development of airfields in Libya.

SIR CHARLES PORTAL said that the information was readily available and he offered to draft a reply for Washington.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Took note that the Chief of the Air Staff would prepare a draft reply which would be sent to the Secretary for despatch.

SECRET

41

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 333rd Meeting

Held on 2nd December 1942

3. NORTH AFRICA AND THE LEVANT: REQUIREMENTS FOR SECURITY.

J.P.(42) 967. -64

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(42) 179th Mtg.(O), Minute 4) -31

THE COMMITTEE had before them a report by the Joint Planning Staff recommending the forces considered necessary to protect shipping in the Mediterranean and to provide for the security of North Africa and the Levant.

SIR CHARLES PORTAL said that he agreed generally with the estimate of air forces required. He pointed out, however, that it would be some time before we could provide so many Torpedo Fighter and Wellington (Leigh Light) Fighter squadrons. He also suggested the addition of one Night Fighter squadron for Algeria.

SIR DUDLEY POUND said that he saw little danger of interference by Italian capital ships with our convoys, provided air forces were established on the scale proposed.

In discussion it was pointed out that the value of this report as a basis for planning would be greatly restricted until a working arrangement for the organisation of Command in the Mediterranean had been reached.

THE COMMITTEE:- -7A

(a) Approved the report as amended in discussion and instructed the Secretary to submit it to the Prime Minister;

(b) Subject to approval by the Prime Minister, instructed the Secretary to send it to the Joint Staff Mission for the Combined Chiefs of Staff, and to send copies to the Cs.-in-C., Middle East, General Eisenhower and Admiral Cunningham. -84

40

Unparaphrased version of a Secret Cypher Telegram
Not One Time Table

IZ 2428

TOO 2205Z/1
TOR 0202Z/2

SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

IMPORTANT

From:- J S M Washington

To:- Chiefs of Staff London

JSM 508 1st December 1942

Your C O S (W) 373. -69

Can you give us our own programme and details for Libyan air fields on same lines as you would like Eisenhower to report.

This would assist us although we realise paramount importance of Tunisian air fields.

TOO 2205Z/1

Circulation

Brig. Jacob
Foreign Secretary
War Registry Admiralty
C.6. Tels., War Office
A.M.C.S.(C)
C.C.O.

69

Unparaphrased Version of Secret Cypher Telegram
not One Time Table

OZ 2071

TOO 1900z/30

TOD 1958z/30

SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

Copy also in B/Command/8

IMPORTANT

Approved for despatch at C.O.S. (42) 331st (6) on 30-11-42. (See (11) in B/Command/8

From:- Air Ministry

To:- Britman, Washington

OZ 2071 30th November 1942

Following from Chiefs of Staff No.COS(W) 373.

We consider that rapid organisation of chain of airfields in North Africa and particularly in Tunisia of paramount importance on which successful re-opening of Mediterranean to military traffic and launching of future Mediterranean operations will largely depend.

2. We suggest that Combined Chiefs of Staff should call for report from General Eisenhower on his programme and timetable for North African airfield development and as to any assistance he requires from U.S.A. or U.K. by special personnel or material.

T.O.O. 1900z/30

Circulation

Brig. Jacob
Foregin Secretary
War Registry, Admiralty
C.6. Tels., War Office
A.M.C.S.(C)
C.C.O.

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MOST SECRET.

Copy No. 21

C.O.S.(42) 420 (O)

29TH NOVEMBER, 1942.

WAR CABINET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

FUTURE OPERATIONS.

Note by Secretary

The Prime Minister has minuted as follows on the attached Memorandum† submitted to him by Mr. Amery.

"It should be brought before C.O.S. Committee when opportunity offers. The ideas are not unsound.

(Intld.) W.S.C.

28/11."

(Signed) L.C. HOLLIS

Offices of the War Cabinet,
S.W.1.
29TH NOVEMBER, 1942.

† Annex.

A N N E X

THE FOLLOW UP

Memorandum by Mr. Amery

Now that we have at last gained the initiative by the occupation of North Africa the next question is how to follow it up. In looking for the answer two main strategic considerations have to be kept in mind. The first is the vital importance of every move by sea and land being covered by an effective umbrella of shore based air force. The second is that our operations should, so far as possible, always be directed against the regions where the enemy's land communications are longest and weakest so that sea transport gives us the opportunity of bringing to the point of contact forces sufficient to overcome opposition.

An offensive front across the Channel satisfies the first condition. It can never satisfy the second, as the enemy can always employ for his concentration against us the whole network of the French and Belgian railway and road systems, while we shall have to rebuild and re-equip the railways as we advance. At the end of the last war we could never have reached the Rhine for many months, however feeble the German resistance, if the Germans had not, under the armistice terms, left the railways intact and surrendered to us the extra rolling stock required. An offensive in this direction, therefore, can obviously only take place when the whole enemy defence begins to crumble. Then it will be the most effective of all. Till then it is from the Mediterranean and at the dragon's soft belly that we must strike.

The first objective is naturally Sicily. The importance of securing Sicily lies not only in opening the Sicily channel and in bringing our air menace closer to Italy, but also in closing the Straits of Messina. The Italian Navy will then be forced to abandon either Taranto and the Adriatic or Genoa and the Western Mediterranean or else to be permanently divided while ours remains free to concentrate in either direction.

What next? The enemy will be expecting Sardinia and Corsica to be the next objectives. That is a reason for leaving them alone for the time being. Also there is another objective closer to hand and better covered by the air umbrella. That is the toe of Italy. To seize this up to the instep should not be beyond our power. While our own intention would be not to go beyond the narrow forty or fifty mile front that could be established there, the enemy would almost certainly assume that we meant a general advance up the length of Italy. This would, of course, only be feasible if Italy really showed signs of collapse. Till then a German-stiffened Italian army could hold up an advance in which the narrowness of the front would always favour the defensive and where our right flank would be exposed to air attack from across the Adriatic.

Holding the toe of Italy would not only give us closer range bombing of Italy generally. It would more particularly enable us to dominate Taranto and Brindisi and so prepare the way for an expedition to seize the heel of Italy. Here we might once more hope to create the impression that we were trying to outflank the defence of Italy, whereas our real aim again would be to defend a narrow front on land - and let the enemy exhaust himself in attacking us - as the vantage ground for the next and much more important operation overseas.

Holding the heel of Italy would give us air command over the narrow exit of the Adriatic, over Corfu and over the Southern Albanian and Epirote coast.

This coast is served by no enemy railway. The only approaches to it are over the mountain passes - blocked by snow for a good many months - from Thessaly and Macedonia. Behind these roads there is only one railway line - the single track line from Nish to Salonika and from Salonika to Athens.

From the point of view of the superiority of sea over land communications, the western coast of the Balkans is the ideal spot for opening a second front on the whole mainland of Europe. It has the further advantage of enabling us to get into immediate touch with local populations in Epirus and Albania willing to rise on our side as well as with Mihailovitch and the Yugoslav Guerrillas. These will, moreover, have been helped by the withdrawal of Italian troops from Yugoslavia to meet our apparent threat to Italy itself. Last, but not least, we should be in a position, by advancing into Macedonia and Thessaly, to cut off all enemy forces in Greece itself. Crete and the Dodecanese would then naturally be ripe for the picking. After that we could in turn deal with Bulgaria, again under conditions adverse to the enemy from the transport point of view. With such encouragement it might even be possible that Turkey might join in.

Let me invert the argument and begin with the main objective and then deal with the steps leading up to it. The most important continental front that we can open in Europe is the possession of the Balkans. It would put us in a position to strike either at the rear of the German line in South Russia, or up the Danube at the heart of Germany itself. We should be operating at the outset in friendly country with warlike populations who could soon be re-armed and re-organised. Our next advance would be through half-hearted countries like Hungary or Rumania. We should, at the same time, cut off Germany from many important mineral and agricultural resources, including Rumanian oil. All this under conditions of transport and supply more favourable, relatively, than we could find anywhere else in enemy-controlled Europe.

If we are to get hold of the Balkans, the easiest approach is through the West coast, using such ports as Valona and Prevesa. To make that approach possible we must for reasons of air security hold the heel of Italy. To get hold of the heel of Italy we must for the same good reason first secure the toe. To get hold of the toe we must secure Sicily.

Not the least important feature of this line of approach is that our real objective would remain undisclosed throughout the earlier successive stages. Or rather, that the earlier stages could equally serve two entirely different objectives. For, in the event of a real collapse in Italy, an advance on that line, helped by the seizure of Sardinia and Corsica, might well be the more fruitful immediate objective to which the occupation of the Balkans might be postponed.

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Printed for the War Cabinet. November 1942.

MOST SECRET. **Copy No.** 21

J.P. (42) 967.

November 28, 1942.

Circulated for the consideration of the Chiefs of Staff

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COS(42)333rd Mtg Item 3.

WAR CABINET.

Joint Planning Staff.

FINAL AT (7A)

NORTH AFRICA AND LEVANT—REQUIREMENTS FOR SECURITY.

Report by the Joint Planning Staff.

AS instructed,* we report below on the requirements for security of North Africa and the Levant.

Assumptions.

2.—(*a*) Axis forces have been cleared from the whole of North Africa, but they retain the islands of Sardinia, Pantellaria, Sicily, Crete and the Dodecanese.

(*b*) An adequate force must be held available in North Africa for the occupation of Spanish Morocco against opposition if the necessity arises.

(*c*) French naval forces in Toulon, Alexandria and Dakar are immobilised.

Objects.

3.—(*a*) To protect shipping in the Mediterranean.

(*b*) To provide for internal security in the Mediterranean Littoral from Syria to French Morocco and for its defence against seaborne and air attack.

General Considerations.

4. Requirements in the Mediterranean cannot be considered purely in terms of defence. The provision of forces for offensive operations will not only provide a large measure of defence, but will materially affect the scale of attack which the enemy can bring to bear against us and his selection of objectives. Our assessment of defensive requirements is therefore subject to such modification as may result from the provision of forces for the offensive.

Enemy Courses of Action.

5. There is no likelihood of a major attack either by seaborne or airborne forces against North Africa, the Levant, Malta or Cyprus. The enemy could not have the protection of single-engine fighters, except in the neighbourhood of Cap Bon and Malta, and even a limited force of Allied aircraft would serve as a complete deterrent. Moreover, the Axis would have difficulty in providing the

* C.O.S. (42) 179th Meeting (O). —31

forces, assault shipping and escorts, and the Italians would not risk their mercantile marine on such ventures.

6. It is highly improbable that the major units of the Italian Fleet will take offensive action against either our shipping or our territory, in the face of shore-based aircraft. On the other hand, the Axis are likely to increase their submarine strength in the Mediterranean and to intensify E-boat and minelaying activities, particularly in the central area.

7. The Germans will probably increase their air forces in the area. It is estimated that, at the beginning of 1943, a force of 1,100 (950 first-line) German aircraft and 1,400 Italian aircraft, will be available. An estimate of their disposition is given in *Appendix I*, but this is largely dependent on the scale of attack which the Allies are themselves developing. While the enemy will in general try to conserve his air strength, his forces include some 360 German and 360 Italian long-range bombers, with which we must expect him to develop heavy scale air attacks against our convoys, ports and key points.

8. To summarise, the enemy may be expected to adopt a mainly defensive attitude in the Mediterranean, and, therefore, the potential threats against which we have to guard are—

(*a*) A German move into Spain, necessitating our entry into Spanish Morocco.
(*b*) Determined attacks against shipping, ports and key points.
(*c*) Sporadic raids by small forces.

The Attitude of the French in North Africa.

9. We cannot estimate at present how far the French civil administration and armed forces can be trusted to co-operate with the Allies. It seems reasonable to suppose that the civil administration will function normally and that the armed forces will, with Allied backing, be capable of ensuring internal security. Our estimate of forces required for the defence of French North Africa is based on this hypothesis.

10. Should the French forces desire to co-operate actively in the defence of their territory, they might take over the coast defences and a proportion of the anti-aircraft defences. In addition, some of the Allied field formations (except those earmarked for Spanish Morocco) might be replaced by French formations. This, however, could not be done immediately owing to the need for re-equipping and training. It would take some 6–9 months to reorganise and re-equip the present French forces on a fully mobile basis and to bring them up to the necessary standard of training. To produce any armoured formations would take twice as long.

Protection of Shipping.

11. Our shipping, together with the limited forces available for its protection, will be operating within range of enemy air atttack. Control of sea communications in the Mediterranean must therefore be achieved primarily through air power. We have based our estimate on a cycle of one 8½-knot convoy of 30 ships every 10 days each way. The sea time required for the passage from Gibraltar to Port Said at this speed would be about 11 days. If this flow of shipping can be achieved it will meet the present rate of military supply by cargo ship to the Middle East, Persia and India. The earlier convoys will, however, almost certainly have to be of smaller size.

Cover Forces.

12. Convoys in the Eastern Mediterranean will be adequately covered by the existing Mediterranean Fleet against attack by light surface forces. In addition, a cover force of the following order will be necessary against such attack in the Western Mediterranean :—

2 small cruisers.
4 Fleet destroyers,
8 Hunt-class destroyers.

Of these, the 8 Hunt class are already allocated to the Inshore Squadron, in the post-"Torch" period, but the remainder must be provided from other sources.

A summary of all naval forces required is given in *Appendix II*.

13. It must be emphasised that naval cover forces in the Mediterranean cannot be reduced to the above figures until shore-based air forces are installed and operating at the recommended strength. The proposed distribution places a smaller force in the Western Mediterranean in view of the better air cover which is available and the probable dispositions of the Italian Fleet. Moreover, reinforcements, if necessary, could more easily be sent from outside the Mediterranean to the western area. However, in order to use our forces to the best advantage, they must be regarded as a common pool.

Naval Escorts.

14. An escort of about 7 A/S Vessels, of which two must be fast, will be required with each convoy. To allow for refitting, boiler cleaning, &c., each group must therefore consist of 10 ships. Three groups will be needed between Gibraltar and Port Said, totalling about 9 Hunt-class destroyers and 21 corvettes. In addition, A/A ships and M.G.Bs. must reinforce in the areas particularly liable to attack, and local defence forces will be required to keep ports and channels clear.

Air Protection.

15. Fighter protection, both long-range and short-range, is necessary, particularly in areas where convoys must pass within range of enemy shore-based fighters. The fighter commitment necessary to meet this threat is estimated to be 24 squadrons of single-engine and 6 squadrons of long-range fighters.

A continuous anti-submarine escort of two aircraft by day and a continuous protective sweep by a Leigh light aircraft by night must be provided for each convoy.

The air forces required for the above, together with their suggested dispositions, are shown in *Appendix III* and *Map A*. These include torpedo bombers and G.R. aircraft, but not bombers, since the strength of the bomber forces will depend on offensive, rather than defensive, considerations.

Defence of Ports and Key Points.

16. The provision of fighter protection for the convoys will go far to provide fighter defence for the ports. In the case of the larger ports and key points, however, purely local defence fighters are required in addition. The number of squadrons and their dispositions must necessarily vary with the situation. It is considered that a general reserve of 21 fighter squadrons should provisionally be allocated as follows :—

Egypt	6	(including 2 Night (F) squadrons).
Palestine	2	(including Cyprus).
Tunisia	5	(including 2 Night (F) squadrons).
Malta	8	(including 2 Night (F) squadrons).

Coastal Defence Requirements.

17. The threat of naval bombardment is very small, and the Allied air force, together with the existing defences, supported by captured heavy guns, will prevent any attempt at even a cut-and-run raid at night.

18. Light batteries are required at all the main ports to guard against E-boats and midget submarines. The ports selected will be required as supply bases and convoy refuges and are shown in *Appendix IV*. Adequate defences could probably be improvised from Light A.A. and other guns captured recently. Excluding Malta, Alexandria and ports to the eastward, the defences of which are presumably adequate, but including Spanish Morocco, the total requirement is 25 batteries.

Anti-Aircraft Requirements.

19. It has been assumed that the defences in Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Malta are adequate to meet the scale of attack envisaged, and that requirements for airfield defences in Cyrenaica and Tripolitania can be met from Middle East resources. Details of the remaining anti-aircraft requirements are given in *Appendix V*. These amount to 504 Heavy A.A. guns and 1,038 Light A.A. guns, excluding those with formations, but including provision for operations in Spanish Morocco. The extent to which French A.A. units could be employed cannot be assessed at the present time.

Land Forces Required.

20. The tasks of the Allied forces will be to support the local forces, whether French or native, in their rôle of maintaining internal security, and also to deter the Axis from attempting seaborne raids. In addition, a separate force must be kept available for operations in Spanish Morocco should they become necessary.

21. The forces required are shown on *Map A* and amount to the equivalent of approximately 14 divisions. In certain areas the forces shown are less than those estimated by the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East,* who envisaged a stronger Axis threat.

22. If operations in Spanish Morocco become necessary there would probably not be any simultaneous threat against Tunisia. It should therefore be possible to reinforce French Morocco from Tunisia, if necessary.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

23. We recommend—

(a) That the Chiefs of Staff should approve this Report as an interim basis for planning by Service Departments and the Principal Administrative Officers Committee. It will not be possible to formulate a firm requirement until the completion of the operations now in progress in North Africa and the approval of our offensive Mediterranean strategy.

(b) That copies of this Paper should be sent for information to Allied Force Headquarters and to the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East.

C. E. LAMBE.
G. M. STEWART.
P. WARBURTON.

Cabinet War Room,
November 28, 1942.

* C.O.S. (42) 320 (O).

APPENDIX I.

ESTIMATE OF GERMAN AND ITALIAN AIR FORCES AS AT THE BEGINNING OF JANUARY 1943.

German Air Force.

	S. France and Corsica.	Sicily and Sardinia.	Italy.	Eastern Mediterranean.	Total.
L.R.B.	...	270	...	90	360
B.R.	10	40	...	50	100
D.B.	30	90	...	30	150
S.E.F.	90	150	50	40	330
T.E.F.	10	50	40	20	120
A/C	...	...	10	...	10
Coastal	10	...	...	20	30
Total...	150	600	100	250	1,100*

* It is estimated that of the total force of 1,100 aircraft approximately 150 would be drawn from the R.T.U. organisation and be based mainly on S. France and Corsica. Thus the first line units in the Mediterranean area would amount to 950 aircraft.

Italian Air Force.

	S. France and Corsica.	Sicily and Sardinia.	Italy.	Eastern Mediterranean.	Total.
L.R.B.	...	180	110	70	360
D.B.	...	15	...	...	15
S.E.F.	50	200	250	100	600
A/C	50	30	90	50	220
Coastal	...	75	100	30	205
Total...	100	500	550	250	1,400

APPENDIX II.

SUMMARY OF NAVAL FORCES REQUIRED.

(*a*) As a cover force in the Eastern Mediterranean :—
- 6 Small cruisers.
- 8 Fleet destroyers.
- 8 Hunt destroyers.

(*b*) As a cover force in the Western Mediterranean :—
- 2 Small cruisers.
- 4 Fleet destroyers.
- 8 Hunt destroyers.

(*c*) For convoy escort inside the Mediterranean :—
- 3 Escort groups (9 Hunt destroyers and 21 Corvettes).

(*d*) For local defence in the Mediterranean :—
- 24 Fleet minesweepers.
- 56 "O" trawlers.
- 52 "L" trawlers.
- 27 A/S trawlers.
- 40 Small craft (to include M.G.Bs. and M.T.Bs.).

NOTE.—It must be emphasised that Naval Cover Forces in the Mediterranean cannot be reduced to the above figures until the shore-based air forces are installed and operating at the recommended strength. The two cover forces must be considered as forming a common pool.

APPENDIX III.

AIR FORCES FOR PROTECTION OF SHIPPING AND LOCAL DEFENCE.

[Calculations are based on British Establishments, *i.e.*, 16 or 12 I.E.]

	S.E.F.	T.E.F. (Day).	T.E.F. (Night).	Torpedo Fighter.	Torpedo Bomber.	G.R. Short Range.	Flying Boats (or L.R.G.R.).	Wellington (Leigh Light).	P.R.U.	Total.
Atlantic Seaboard...	Provided by existing Gibraltar Command.									...
Morocco and Algeria	9	2	...	2	1	2	1	1	...	18
Tunisia	7 3(R)	1	2(R)	...	...	1	1	1	½(T.E.)	16½
Malta...	6(R)	...	2(R)	2	1	...	...	...	½(T.E.)	11½
Tripolitania ...	...	2	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	3
Cyrenaica	8	1	...	2	1	2	1	1	½(S.E.)	16½
Egypt	4(R)	...	2(R)	...	...	...	1	1	...	8
Palestine, Cyprus, Syria	2(R)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Total Squadrons ...	24 15(R)	6	6(R)	6	3	6	4	4	1½	75½
Total Aircraft ...	624	96	96	96	48	96	48	64	24	1,192

(R) = Part of General Reserve of Defensive Fighters (15 (Day) and 6 (Night) (F) Squadrons) for allocation as required.

APPENDIX IV.

ANTI-M.T.B. COAST DEFENCE BATTERIES REQUIRED.

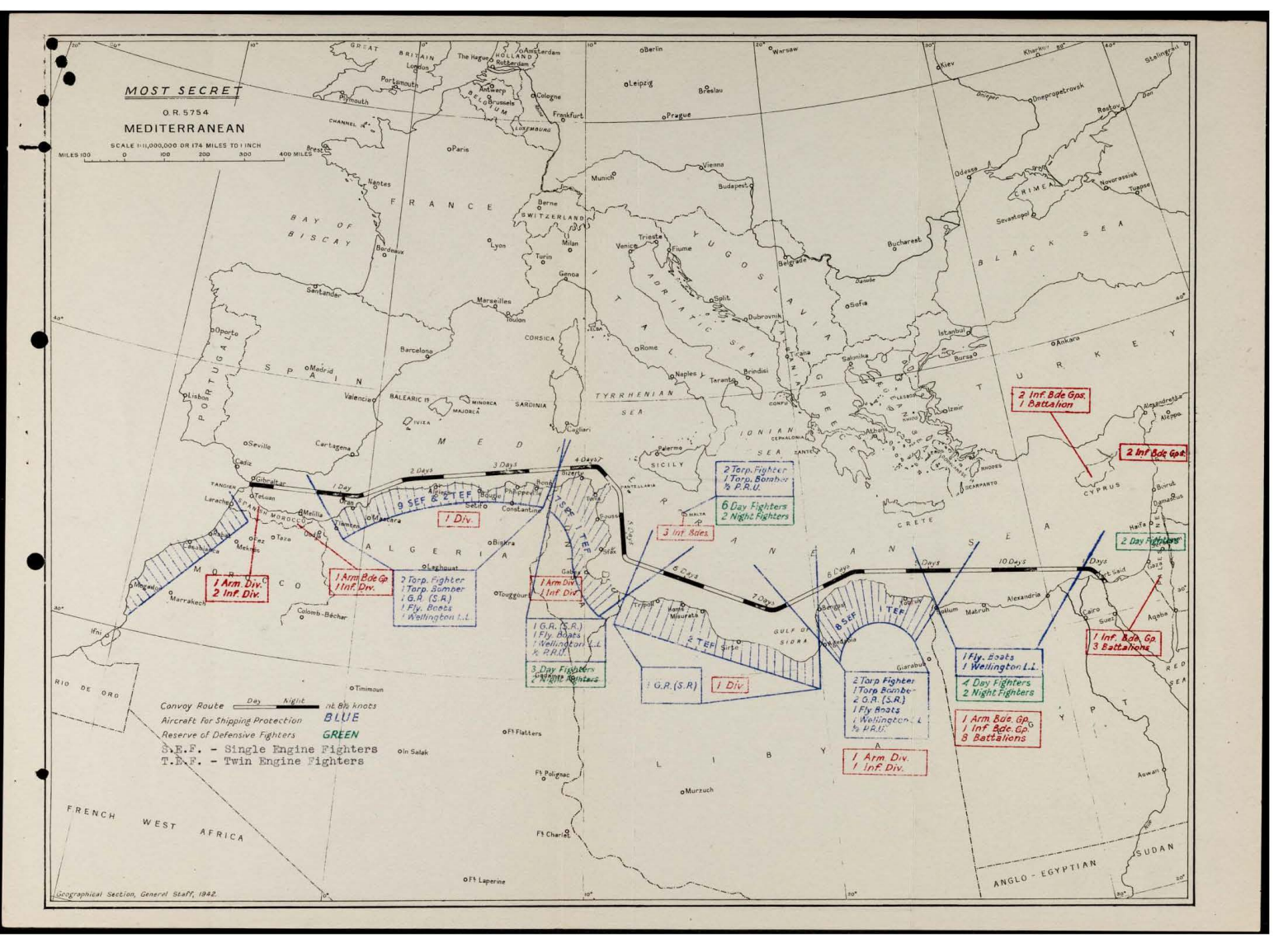
Tobruk	2	
Benghazi	2	
Tripoli	2	
Sfax	1	
Sousse	1	
Tunis	2	
Bizerta	2	
Bone	1	
Bougie	1	
Algiers	2	
Oran	2	
Casablanca	2	
		20
In addition, if Spanish Morocco has to be occupied:—		
Melilla	1	
Ceuta	2	
Tangier	2	
		5
Total		25

APPENDIX V.

ANTI-AIRCRAFT REQUIREMENTS.

	Heavy Guns.	*Light Guns.*	
Ports—			
Tobruk	24	36	} Middle East Estimate.*
Benghazi	24	36	
Tripoli	24	36	
Sfax	8	12	
Sousse	16	24	
Tunis	24	36	
Bizerta	24	36	
Bone	16	24	
Bougie	16	24	
Algiers	24	36	
Oran	16	24	
Casablanca	8	12	
	224	336	
Airfields—			
25 airfields in French North Africa	100	300	
L. of C.—			
In Cyrenaica and Tripolitania	16	72	Middle East Estimate.*
In Tunisia and Algeria	48	108	
Total	388	816 =	{ 481⅓ Brit. Hy. A.A. Btys. 45⅓ „ Lt. „ „
In addition, if Spanish Morocco has to be occupied:—			
Ports—			
Oran (additional)	8	12	
Melilla	8	12	
Ceuta	16	24	
Tangier	24	36	
Casablanca (additional)	16	24	
Airfields—			
5 in Spanish Morocco	20	60	Includes Tetuan town.
L. of C.—			
In French and Spanish Morocco	24	54	
Total	116	222	
Grand Total	504	1,038 =	{ 63 Brit. Hy. A.A. Btys. 57⅓ „ Lt. „ „

* C.O.S. (42) 320 (O).


MOST SECRET
O.R.5754
MEDITERRANEAN
SCALE 1:11,000,000 OR 174 MILES TO 1 INCH
MILES 100 0 100 200 300 400 MILES
2 Inf. Bde Gps. 1 Battalion
2 Inf. Bde Gps.
2 Torp. Fighter 1 Torp. Bomber ½ P.R.U. 6 Day Fighters 2 Night Fighters
3 Inf. Bdes.
9 SEF & 2 TEF
1 Div.
1 Arm. Div. 2 Inf. Div.
1 Arm. Bde Gp 1 Inf. Div.
2 Torp. Fighter 1 Torp. Bomber 1 G.R. (S.R.) 1 Fly. Boats 1 Wellington L.L.
1 Arm Div 1 Inf. Div
1 G.R. (S.R.) 1 Fly. Boats 1 Wellington L.L. ½ P.R.U. 3 Day Fighters 2 Night Fighters
1 G.R. (S.R.)
1 Div.
8 SEF 1 TEF
2 Torp. Fighter 1 Torp. Bomber 2 G.R. (S.R.) 1 Fly. Boats 1 Wellington L.L. ½ P.R.U.
1 Arm. Div. 1 Inf. Div.
1 Fly. Boats 1 Wellington L.L. 4 Day Fighters 2 Night Fighters
1 Arm. Bde. Gp. 1 Inf. Bde. Gp. 8 Battalions
2 Day Fighters
1 Inf. Bde. Gp. 3 Battalions
Convoy Route Day Night nt 8½ knots
Aircraft For Shipping Protection BLUE
Reserve of Defensive Fighters GREEN
S.E.F. - Single Engine Fighters
T.E.F. - Twin Engine Fighters
Geographical Section, General Staff, 1942.

66

Dear Jack

Cos [illegible] friend

[illegible]. Could

[illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] dinner.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Yrs

25/x.

Keep hands. I am in touch with H.O.I, and expect a call from them tomorrow

[illegible]

25/11

Brigadier Jacob.

Reference your note above. It is now 10 days old. Is there any further action there? D

N.A.

The W.O. (CIGS)
Sent a telegram

K
4/11

A/PdI/ME/1

Brig. Jacob

What do you
think about this?
Is it worth putting
the point to
the COS?

CRP
23/11

Col Price -

I suggest this should be raised
orally. It was mentioned
tonight, but without any words.
I should have thought the point was
that what we are offering to the
Turks are Parliament Types, for
which Ld. Inchcape's title be granted?
23/11

COPY

Brig. Hollis for action

65

10, Downing St.

221/1

Addressed to : GENERAL ISMAY

51

COPY OF MINUTE BY THE PRIME MINISTER

Reference: Telegram IZ 2259 from J.S.M. Washington to Chiefs of Staff London. 19 November, 1942.

"General Ismay

Do C.O.S. think arrangements necessary? If so please draft for consideration.

W.S.C.

22.11.42.

Unparaphrased Version of a Secret
Cypher Telegram not One Time Table.

OZ. 2040
TOO. 1038Z/28
TOD. 1358Z/28

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM.

IMPORTANT

From:- Air Ministry

To:- Britman Washington

OZ. 2040 28th Nov. 1942. DOTEL No. 564.

Smith, who is proceeding to Washington, has been given outline of Chiefs of Staff views on planning for BRIMSTONE and HUSKY and command in Mediterranean area. Following is summary for your private information.

2. Planning for BRIMSTONE already being carried out by Eisenhower's planning staff at Norfolk House. C.O.S. proposed and Smith agreed today that outline plan for HUSKY should be prepared by Joint Planning Staff, in conjunction with A.F.H.Q. and C.C.O. since considerable forces from U.K. and Middle East will be required in addition to those from North Africa.

3. Planning for both operations will proceed simultaneously. Assuming earliest date for BRIMSTONE assault is end March, decision as to which of the two operations is to be carried out has to be taken by 10th January.

4. All agree that standard of training required for either BRIMSTONE or HUSKY will have to be much higher than that accepted for TORCH.

5. Ideas on best organisation of command in the Mediterranean not yet formulated. C.N.S. wants two naval commands. This suits the Army since division of land forces in two commands is inevitable. C.A.S. however, still favours unified command of air forces over the whole M.E. - Mediterranean area. Egypt has been developed into a good base for operation of large air forces and nothing comparable is likely in North Africa for many months. Tunis, however, is main springboard for air operations in central Mediterranean. Therefore desirable both areas should be in same Command. Maximum air forces can and should be concentrated on whatever target is considered most important at the time. American air force not considered able to assume full responsibility in Western Theatre since they are not trained for

/night operations

night operations anti-submarine work or area protection. Further consideration is being given to the problem and Smith considers we should not attempt a rigid tie up at this juncture. It would be a pity to break up Allied command system, which has worked really well considering all the difficulties which inevitably crop up.

6. C.O.S. are toying with idea of a C.C.O.S. in London parallel to your organisation in Washington. Object is to focus control of European theatre in London, leaving Washington to direct operations in Far East and Pacific. Project is very much in embryo at present and is not yet being raised officially, but Smith has C.O.S. views with which he seems to be in sympathy.

E(W)A.11

7. C.O.S(W) 365 and 367 gave summary of matters with which we are most concerned in French West Africa. Our own authorities in British West Africa are most anxious to maintain direct contact with French authorities. Navy and R.A.F. want British control of Dakar and necessary air bases along African coast in connection with anti-sumbarine patrols and convoy protection. In fact we think that French West Africa ought to be a British sphere of influence. We realise, however, that this is not practical politics at present. First stage must be for Eisenhower to obtain full co-operation of French authorities and facilities required for Anglo-American forces. When this has been done, it will be time to discuss division of these facilities between Americans and ourselves and we shall probably put forward a strong case. Until situation develops further we cannot say what will be best method of approach.

T.O.O. 1038Z/28

(Circulation)

Brigadier Jacob

63

Unparaphrased version of a Secret
Cypher Telegram not One Time Table.

OZ. 2033.
TOO. 1500Z/27.
TOD. 1532Z/27.

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

IMMEDIATE

From: Air Ministry.

To: Britman, Washington.

DOTEL NO. 561. 27th November, 1942. OZ. 2033.

Dykes from Jacob.

Reference J.S.M. 487 51 and War Office telegram 82503 A.C.I.G.S. of 26 Nov.

1. 62 Does latter telegram give you enough background? The position is that owing to 8th Army's success, it is possible to provide equipment for the Turks from the Middle East, even though it means temporarily increasing even further the deficiency on establishment. One cannot see anywhere for those formations of the Middle East Army, which are not going to take part in the advance to Tripoli, to fight in the next three or four months. The whole thing, however, depends upon the flow being maintained from the U.S. and the U.K. so that establishments will be made good in time for next year's campaigns. It is only in this sense that there is a surplus which can be sent to the Turks.

2. We do not see why the Americans should misinterpret paragraph 14(b), because, after all, we are only proposing to do what we are constantly pressing on them to do on our behalf, i.e. to send equipment where it is most wanted at the moment (in this case to Turkey), even though it means deferring the building up of formations not actually in contact with the enemy.

3. If further official explanation on these lines is required, I suggest that the Field Marshal should telegraph to C.I.G.S. asking for it.

T.O.O. 1500Z/27.

(Circulation)
Brigadier Jacob.

62

MOST SECRET
CIPHER TELEGRAM

From: War Office. Despp.0030.27 Nov.42.

To: B.A.S. Washington.

82503 A.C.I.G.S. cipher 26 Nov.

IMMEDIATE.

MOST SECRET.

Personal for Field Marshall Dill from C.I.G.S.

Reference J.S.M. 487 19 Nov. -51

FIRST. We must of course combat any tendency to interpret para 14 b of C.O.S.(W) -45 351 in the sense which you apprehend. The provision of Tanks to Turkey from M.E. must of course be at the expense of the equipment of our own troops there. It postulates tanks being replaced in the M.E. from overseas and the flow from U.S. being maintained.

SECOND. Total number of tanks required for armoured formations in M.E. in 1943 including reserves but excluding wastage replacements is 4287 (half of 8574).

THIRD. Against this we had on 18 Nov A serviceable 749 B in workshops 1572 C in transit 357 Total 2678 (half of 5356).

FOURTH. Very doubtful if some 700 of B in third can ever be rendered serviceable.

FIFTH. Thus deficiency on requirements is approx 2300 increasing to 2500 when 200 Valentines have been despatched to Turkey.

SIXTH. After adding tanks required to replace wastage through 1943 our total requirement is of the order of 4500 Medium Tanks.

SEVENTH. Position is therefore as stated in your fourth that we are faced with a surplus NOT of tanks but of forces proved in battle who, if equipped would become available for action in conjunction with Turkey or elsewhere.

C.6.(Telegrams.) T.0.0.1940 hrs. A/26.

Copies to:
S. of S.
C.I.G.S.
V.C.I.G.S.
D.C.I.G.S.
A.C.I.G.S.
D.M.O.
D.D.M.O.(O). (H)
D.M.I.
D.D.M.I.(I).
D.A.F.V.
D.A.L.M.
D.P. (2 copies)
M.O.1.
G.S.(P).
Brig. Jacob.
First Sea Lord.
C.A.S.
C.C.O.

Extract from C.O.S(42) 189 th mtg. (O)

Held on 25th November 1942

61

~~Part of 327th Mtg~~
~~(O)~~ 9

1. FUTURE OPERATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

(C.O.S.(42) 397 (O) and 413 (O))

THE CONFERENCE considered General Eisenhower's comments* on the note by the Prime Minister/ on plans and operations in the Mediterranean.

SIR ALAN BROOKE said that the Chiefs of Staff were, on the whole, in agreement with General Eisenhower's comments. It seemed, however, in the light of the latest intelligence reports, that General Eisenhower had probably over-estimated the size and efficiency of the Axis forces which were likely to be encountered in Tripoli, unless these were reinforced by the escape of Axis forces from the Tunis-Bizerta area.

THE PRIME MINISTER asked the Chief of Imperial General Staff to provide Brigadier-General Smith with a short note summarizing the latest intelligence reports from North Africa which he could take with him on his forthcoming visit to Washington.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL SMITH said that General Eisenhower was anticipating a hard fight in Tunisia and would consider himself lucky if he was in full occupation of the Bizerta-Tunis area by mid-December. It would be only prudent, thereafter, to make plans and preparations for the despatch of a force of up to two divisions into Tripolitania. These preparations need not interfere with plans and preliminary arrangements for "BRIMSTONE". The present directive to the Allied Force Commander gave priority to the clearance of Axis forces out of the whole of North Africa. If it was the intention of the Combined Chiefs of Staff that General Eisenhower's attention should be directed towards "BRIMSTONE" before Tripolitania was cleared, then a revision of the directive would be necessary.

GENERAL SMITH then explained the proposed deployment of the first ten "TORCH" divisions in North Africa and emphasized that the rate of build up of land forces to the eastward would be governed by the capacity of the over-land communications. We could not expect to get much in through the Tunisian ports and the capacity of the Algerian and Tunisian railways was affected by the shortage of coal.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that he was inclined to take a more optimistic view of our prospects in Tunisia and Tripolitania. It would, of course, be only prudent to make preparations, after the occupation of Tunis and Bizerta, to strike a blow at the rear of the Axis forces opposing General Alexander but he hoped that before the blow was ready to fall the remnants of Rommel's army would have been annihilated by our forces advancing from the east.

SIR DUDLEY POUND said that it was hoped, in a few days time, to establish naval surface forces at BONE. This should enable us to restrict the flow of Axis reinforcements to Tunisia. It might even pay us to prolong land operations in this area in order to cause further attrition to the German Air Force in circumstances favourable to ourselves.

* C.O.S.(42) 413(O)
/ C.O.S.(42) 397(O)

THE PRIME MINISTER while admitting that the damage we could inflict on the German Air Force would be some consolation for any delay in capturing Tunis and Bizerta, said that it should be our object to eliminate the Axis forces from Tunisia and lay our hands on this strategic prize as soon as possible.

THE CONFERENCE then discussed the timetable for "BRIMSTONE" and GENERAL SMITH said that, even if all went well and the necessary shipping could be provided, the rate of build up of air forces in Tunisia would not permit of the launching of "BRIMSTONE" until early March at the very best. A preliminary review of the shipping situation made it appear, however, that the operation could not be launched until towards the end of March.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that he was prepared to accept this forecast particularly in view of the consequent easement in naval escorts which would probably allow us to fit in three P.Q. convoys starting with the first on the 22nd December. He agreed with the policy of building up strong air forces in Tunisia, particularly as these would be needed for opening the Mediterranean to our Middle East convoys. Once these air forces had been built up it was, however, for consideration whether we should not be better advised to attack Sicily rather than Sardinia.

GENERAL SMITH said that no appreciation had yet been made by Allied Force Headquarters of the forces required for the capture of Sicily, but General Eisenhower was keen on tackling Sardinia next and of mounting the operation from the United Kingdom in order that tactical surprise might be achieved.

SIR DUDLEY POUND said that it was by no means certain that we could afford to take on Sicily leaving the Sardinian airfields on the flank of our communications.

SIR ALAN BROOKE said that a preliminary study had shown that the assault forces required for Sicily were far in excess of those required for Sardinia. He was in favour, however, of having both projects worked out in detail and of making preparations on the largest scale which our resources would permit. A decision could be taken nearer the time as to which enterprise should be undertaken; the other could then be exploited for "cover" purposes.

LORD LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN said that if it was our intention ultimately to occupy both Sardinia and Sicily we should probably achieve this object earlier by tackling Sardinia first. Once we were in possession of the airfields in the Cagliari area the assault forces could be withdrawn and prepared for the Sicilian operation, since the rest of Sardinia could then be occupied by overland operations. The capture of Sicily entailed simultaneous assault landings at the opposite ends of the Island in order to get possession of the key airfields. It would, therefore, take much longer to assemble the necessary trained assault forces and landing craft, and the Axis would be given more time to reinforce both islands. It should, however, be possible to restrict the reinforcement of Sardinia by air attack on Cagliari.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that both operations should be fully worked out and that preparations should go ahead so as to leave us the option of doing either, depending on developments during the next month or six weeks.

IT WAS AGREED:-

(a) That the Chief of Imperial General Staff would furnish Brigadier-General Smith with a note of the latest intelligence reports affecting North Africa.

(b) The Chiefs of Staff should consider with Brigadier General Smith, acting on behalf of General Eisenhower, the procedure to be adopted for the simultaneous planning and preparation for "BRIMSTONE" and "HUSKY".

SECRET.

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE.

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 188th Meeting. (O)

Held on 25th November 1942.

3. MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY

C.O.S. (42) 397 (O) and 413 (O);
J.P. (42) 972.

THE COMMITTEE proceeded to review our Mediterranean strategy in the light of the following papers:-

(i) A note by the Prime Minister on future plans and operations in the Mediterranean theatre (C.O.S. (42) 397 (O)).

(ii) General Eisenhower's comments on the Prime Minister's note (C.O.S. (42) 413 (O)).

(iii) A report by the Joint Planning Staff answering the Prime Minister's questionnaire (J.P.(42) 972).

Referring to General Eisenhower's comments, SIR ALAN BROOKE drew attention to the estimate of Axis forces in Tripoli in paragraph 5. This showed the total Axis forces now in Tripoli, the bulk of which were preparing to oppose General Alexander in the East. The opposition to an advance from Tunisia should therefore be much weaker than this estimate. On the other hand General Eisenhower's forecast of the earliest dates on which the advance from the Gabes area could begin might prove to be reasonably accurate if the Axis forces in Tunisia put up a stout resistance.

A general discussion brought out several other points. Apart from shipping, the factor most likely to decide the earliest date on which further offensive operations could begin was likely to be the preparation of airfields in Tunisia. General Eisenhower's present directive did not go beyond operations in North Africa and he would require further direction from the Combined Chiefs of Staff about his subsequent operations. It was apparent that the major question of organisation of command in the Mediterranean affected almost all the problems in that area. Until that was decided it would be difficult to give authoritative answers to a number of outstanding questions. Thus it was felt that, while the answers suggested by the Joint Planning Staff to the Prime Minister's questions were on the right lines, further consideration would be necessary before they could be approved for submission to him.

LORD LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN asked the Committee to give him an estimated date before which no further assault troops would be required to leave the United Kingdom.

THE COMMITTEE agreed:-

(a) To follow the general line indicated above at their discussion with the Prime Minister on C.O.S. (42) 397 (O) and C.O.S. (42) 413 (O) later that evening;

(b) To use J.P. (42) 972 as an aide memoire for that discussion;

(c) That no assault forces for a major combined operation would be expected to leave this country before 1st February.

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

The circulation of this paper has been strictly limited.

It is issued for the personal use of Brig. Hollis

TO BE KEPT UNDER LOCK AND KEY

It is requested that special care may be taken to ensure the secrecy of this document

59

MOST SECRET.

Copy No. 20

Circulated for consideration of the Chiefs of Staff.

J.P.(42) 972

24th November, 1942

WAR CABINET

JOINT PLANNING STAFF

MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY - QUESTIONNAIRE

Report by the Joint Planning Staff

35

In accordance with instructions, we attach+ at Annex I a draft reply to the Prime Minister's questionnaire. At Annex II we attach, for the information of the Chiefs of Staff, a statement of the detailed reasoning on which our answer to the Prime Minister's third question is based.

2. We also attach* for the consideration of the Chiefs of Staff a provisional programme of events for the war against Germany for the first half of 1943, which we consider might serve as a basis for discussion with the United Chiefs of Staff, and with General Eisenhower.

3. Now that we have wrested the initiative from the Germans the importance of a clear cut programme to which all Services and Departments can work is very greatly enhanced. Unless the intentions of the British and American Governments are clearly promulgated in plenty of time, we shall be unable to make full use of the initiative we have gained.

(Signed) C.E. LAMBE

G.M. STEWART

R.E. VINTRAS

+ C.O.S.(42) 183rd Mtg. (O) Item 3 (b). 35

* Annex III

Cabinet War Room

ANNEX I

DRAFT REPLY TO THE PRIME MINISTER

QUESTION (i)

1. Is the occupation of Sardinia (a) necessary or (b) desirable for the re-opening of the Mediterranean for military traffic, and/or for bringing on the big air battle which is our aim?

ANSWER

2. Even with the enemy in occupation of Sardinia, Sicily and Crete, we believe we shall be able to run regular convoys of military store ships through the Mediterranean when once the necessary air and naval installations have been established in Africa.

3. We cannot risk running regular personnel convoys through the Central Mediterranean until at least Sicily, and probably also Sardinia, are in our hands. Nevertheless, if we can off-load personnel at Algiers, and pass them overland to Gabes and onwards in small ships, we can make use of the Mediterranean for personnel traffic. This possibility is being investigated.

4. Sardinia is, therefore, desirable for the re-opening of the Mediterranean for military traffic, but only necessary if the overland transport of personnel across Eastern Algeria and Tunisia proves impracticable. Nevertheless, the capture of Sardinia will greatly facilitate the passage of our convoys, not only by denying air bases to the enemy, but by giving us air bases for our counter measures against Axis naval and air attack, and for throwing the enemy on the defensive over a wide arc.

5. The best way in which we can compel the continuation of the air battle after Tripolitania and Tunisia have been cleared up is by a large scale combined operation. Sardinia is merely one of two or three objectives an attack on which would bring on a big air battle. At present it looks as though we ought to be able to assault this island sooner than we can assault any other major objective. Sardinia is not, however, the best area over which to fight the air battle. We would, for instance, prefer to fight this battle over Sicily.

QUESTION (ii)

6. If not, should Sicily have priority over Sardinia as our first objective, observing that, from the political point of view, Sicily is infinitely preferable to Sardinia?

ANSWER

7. The assault on either island will be a formidable undertaking, especially so if German reinforcements are put in before our attack can take place. Apart from the time factor to which we refer below, the relative advantages and disadvantages appear to be:-

Sicily

1. In addition to its greater political value, Sicily is a much greater prize from the point of view of opening up the Mediterranean.

2. Sicily is a more favourable area over which to bring about an air battle.

3. Sicily is at present more strongly held than Sardinia.

4. The Axis have a far quicker reinforcement route (the Messina train ferries) to, and can maintain larger forces in, Sicily than in Sardinia.

Sardinia

1. Sardinia opens up a wider threat of attack to the Italian coastline. It is a better base from which to interrupt Italy's coastal shipping and to trouble the mainland with seaborne raids and harassing air attacks.

2. Axis reinforcement of Sardinia must be largely confined to the port of Cagliari, and should be capable of considerable interruption.

3. Our communications to Sardinia would be more secure than to Sicily.

4. With the exception of Naval forces the resources required to take Sardinia or Sicily will be in the approximate ratio of 3 to 5.

8. In short, the relative advantages and disadvantages are finely balanced. In our view, therefore, the decision should turn on the time factor.

We must not give the German Air Force a respite in which to recover from the disorganisation which "Torch" and "Lightfoot" have forced upon it. Nor must we give Italian morale a chance to steady itself. Finally, and perhaps most important of all, we should aim to stretch Germany to the limit this winter for the benefit of Russia next Spring.

As you will see from the answer to Question (iii), we are unlikely to be able to attempt the capture of Sicily until July; but there is still a chance, if things go well in Tunisia, of being able to attack Sardinia at the end of February.

Furthermore, we think that the German order of reinforcement, should the German High Command decide on it, is likely to be the Italian mainland (to the extent necessary to maintain internal security and morale), then Sicily and lastly Sardinia.

9. We must explain that we cannot assess the shipping implications of an assault on Sardinia until General Eisenhower has approved a firm outline plan. It may turn out that operations in Tunisia or our attenuated shipping resources force us to delay action until later in the year. A delay would enable us to use the new type of large landing craft and tank landing ships which we expect from America, thus reducing the number of valuable assault ships and store ships which would otherwise be exposed to risk. If we are forced to delay, the subsequent choice will be a difficult one.

Meanwhile, however, we recommend that the attack on Sardinia should have priority over that on Sicily, and that plans should be pressed forward by Allied Force H.Q. at the maximum speed.

QUESTION (iii)

10. How soon could an attack on (a) Sardinia and (b) Sicily be launched, observing that the longer the attack is delayed, the greater will be the defences to be overcome at both places?

ANSWER

11. We consider that the 26th February can be taken as the target date for Sardinia provided that Tunisia is cleaned up quickly and provided also that the island is not, in the meantime, reinforced by Germans as distinct from Italians, an event which would almost certainly delay the date. In spite of the many advantages of seizing Sardinia at an earlier date than this, we do not think that General Eisenhower could possibly undertake the operation until then, owing to the limitations of shipping and the necessity of building new air fields on the African shore before adequate air protection can be given. If German, as opposed to Italian, reinforcements reach the island meanwhile it is unlikely that this date will be attainable.

12. The seizure of Sicily is a much more formidable operation, and we shall not have sufficient trained and equipped assault forces until about next July.

QUESTION (iv)

13. Do we wish, at this stage of the campaign, to have a powerful French Army in North Africa, observing that:-

(a) Equipment for the French can be provided only at the expense of the Anglo-American forces in North Africa; and

(b) It is necessary for us to keep the 'whiphand' over a nation which has consistently opposed us (e.g., Syria, Madagascar and, recently, in North Africa), while admitting our enemies (e.g., Indo-China)?

ANSWER

14. No. The factors in your (a) and (b) are over-riding. If the French turn out to be reasonably trustworthy, we should aim at building up their Army for internal security purposes and possibly for coast and A.A. defence, but not for offensive purposes.

QUESTION (v)

15. Should the capture of Tripoli be assigned to General Alexander or to General Eisenhower, observing that the rearward services which would be required by the latter for this operation could be provided only at the expense of the build-up of fighting troops in North Africa and offensive operations against Sardinia and/or Sicily?

ANSWER

16. When we are established in Benghazi and Tunisia and have supplied Malta, we shall be exceptionally well placed to cut Rommel's supplies and his defeat should, therefore, be merely a matter of time. We are looking to General Eisenhower for our main offensive in the Western Mediterranean. The

capture of Tripolitania should therefore be assigned to General Alexander. If he meets with more difficulty than we expect he should inform General Eisenhower that he needs help from the West. General Eisenhower should, in this case, give him help as he can without prejudice to preparations for the assault on Sardinia, which should only be delayed in the last resort.

DATE OF DECISION

19. No final decision to undertake the operation against Sardinia on 26th February need immediately be taken; it must in any case depend on the successful outcome of the present operations in Tunisia. But if, as we recommend, we are to be ready to launch an attack on Sardinia by this date, certain immediate action is necessary.

18. Detailed planning cannot begin until General Eisenhower has approved an outline plan, and until he has decided how much can be cut off the tail of "Torch". Detailed planning, movement, loading, rehearsal and passage are likely to take about 80 days, so that an approved outline plan must be in the hands of commanders by 8th December. Approval in principle to the policy must be given by both Washington and London by the same date to ensure that there is no subsequent hold-up with shipping and escort allocations.

19. Even eighty days may prove insufficient if the necessary force is found to be so big that we have to load it in two portions. Furthermore, we cannot properly weigh up the effects of the operation on our shipping position until a detailed plan has been made.

20. On all counts, therefore, outline planning and agreement with the Americans on policy must be completed by 8th December.

ANNEX II.

EXAMINATION OF THE POSSIBILITIES OF ATTACK ON SARDINIA AND SICILY

SARDINIA

An Improvised Force

1. We have considered the possibility of a very early attempt on Sardinia before the Island can be strongly reinforced and before Italian morale can recover from its present low state. Even with the present garrison and state of defences of Sardinia such an operation would be a complete gamble, for the forces we could muster would be insufficient if the garrison offered any serious resistance. Air cover would be thin so that shipping losses would be heavy. If we failed, we should have presented our enemies with a much needed tonic for Italian morale.

2. We are, therefore, forced to conclude that we cannot capture Sardinia without a deliberate operation which cannot be mounted before the enemy has had an opportunity of reinforcing the island, and that we must, therefore, count on meeting considerable resistance.

A Full Scale Assault

3. Approval has not yet been given to any outline plan for attacking Sardinia. We understand that the most likely plan is one which involves a three-divisional assault on the east and west coasts and a rapid overland advance to take the port of Cagliari from the rear. We Understand that Allied Force Headquarters Planning Staff consider that their requirements are of the order of:-

1 Armoured Division
3 Divisions
58 Squadrons

4. The date by which this plan could be carried out depends chiefly on the provision of the necessary air support. This involves the improvement of some of the existing airfields in eastern Algeria and Tunisia and the construction of three new ones from which fighter support can be given. Assuming that work can be begun on these by 8th December, it is hoped that they would be ready on about 16th February. Allowing 10 days for preliminary air action, the operation could take place on about 26th February which would fall conveniently near the moon's last quarter. Allied Force H.Q. Planning Staff estimate is 2nd March, the difference being due to the allowance of 14 days for preliminary air action instead of 10. We have discussed this with Allied Force H.Q. who agree that 10 days may be sufficient.

5. By this time it is anticipated that the garrison of Sardinia may have been increased from the existing 3 Italian divisions to a total of six divisions which is the limit beyond which the enemy is unlikely to reinforce it. The plan, however, is designed to overcome this scale of resistance by Italian forces. If, as is possible, two of the six divisions are German, it would be necessary to modify this plan.

Time for Planning and Preparation

6. The following allowances are probably necessary:-

Detailed planning	21 days
Movement planning	16 days
Loading	14 days
Assembly and rehearsal	8 days
Passage	21 days
	80 days

7. This means that, for an assault on 26th February an approved outline plan should be in the hands of the Force Commanders by 8th December. If, when detailed planning is complete, it is found that the force is too big for all ships to load simultaneously, it would not be possible for the assault to be carried out by 26th February without cutting down the times given for planning and rehearsal and thus introducing the dangers consequent upon hasty preparation.

Conclusion

8. We therefore recommend that 26th February should be taken as the target date for Operation "Brimstone". It should be noted, however, that if German reinforcements to Sardinia necessitate a modification to the plan, this may entail a further delay.

SICILY

9. Our preliminary studies of Operation "Husky" show that an assault with some 14 brigades will be necessary. This is likely to prove a formidable operation, in which strong resistance is to be expected. British forces will probably have to provide the major part of the assault since the American Army seaborne assault technique is less advanced than our own. If the American Army can provide five assault brigades by next July, however, we believe that the operation should be possible, for we ourselves expect to have nine brigades trained and equipped by that date. We do not think the operation could be carried out before July.

ANNEX III

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

24th November onwards	Complete capture of Cyrenaica and Tunisia.	The time required to complete capture of Cyrenaica and preparations for forward movements into Tripolitania cannot be accurately forecast but 15th to 24th December is General Alexander's estimate of the date of completion of these preparations. Tunisia should also be in our hands by the latter date.
	Build up air forces in Central Mediterranean and start bombing Italy	
	Prevent reinforcement of Sardinia	
	Sever Axis communications with Tripolitania	
8th December	Outline Plan for "Brimstone" to be approved	
22nd December to 24th January	RUN P.Q.19 (and Q.P.16 if required)	
End of January	COMPLETE CAPTURE OF TRIPOLI	There might be certain advantages in delaying final capture of Tripoli to take place shortly before "Brimstone" in order to keep the Germans busy supporting Africa as long as possible.
5th February	"Brimstone" assault convoy leaves U.K.	This date is fixed by the availability of shipping and the need to prepare additional landing grounds in Tunisia.
February	Start occasional store-ship convoys through the Mediterranean.	

26th February (D+110 of "Torch")	EARLIEST POSSIBLE D. DAY FOR "BRIMSTONE".	The moon is in the last quarter which is advantageous.
	Culmination of large scale Deception Plan directed at Crete or the Dodecanese, accompanied by Commando Raids and Diversions if these fit into the plan.	
April	Complete capture of Sardinia.	Once Cagliari is captured the success of the operation should be assured, but there may be mopping-up operations to be conducted against guerillas.
	Start regular store-ship convoys through the Mediterranean.	The effect of "Brimstone" on W.S. movement will be investigated. It is to be hoped that the delay imposed will be compensated by routeing convoys via the Mediterranean.
Summer 1943	ASSAULT ON CRETE AND DODECANESE or ASSAULT ON SICILY.	
	OPERATION AGAINST U-BOAT BASES.	Availability of landing craft may limit the scale of the operation.
	RE-START P.Q. CONVOYS.	

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

58

The circulation of this paper has been strictly limited.
It is issued for the personal use of Brig. Hollis (Miss Bright)

TO BE KEPT UNDER LOCK AND KEY

It is requested that special care may be taken to ensure the secrecy of this document

MOST SECRET.

Copy No. 23

C.O.S.(42) 413 (O)

24TH NOVEMBER, 1942.

WAR CABINET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

PLANS AND OPERATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, MIDDLE EAST AND NEAR EAST

Copy of Letter dated 24th November, 1942, from Brigadier-General W.B. Smith, Allied Force Headquar to Lieut.-General Ismay

x x x x

I enclose herewith General Eisenhower's comments ♁ on the note by the Minister of Defense on Plans and Operations in the Mediterranean ⁂, which you sent to me on 17 November.

42

General Eisenhower is anxious that the Chiefs of Staff should send a copy of this paper to the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East, and would be glad to be furnished with a copy of any comments which they may have.

x x x x

(Signed) W.B. SMITH.

Offices of the War Cabinet,
S.W.1.

24th November, 1942.

♁ Annex.
⁂ C.O.S.(42) 397 (O). 42

A N N E X

PLANS AND OPERATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Comments by Commander-in-Chief, Allied Forces on Note by Minister of Defense, 17 November.

1. I am in full agreement that the first task before us is to conquer the African Shores of the Mediterranean. First, TUNISIA must be occupied and the Axis forces therein destroyed: this is the immediate task, and, in my view, no consideration of possible future operations should be allowed to deflect or delay the forces that are required for the successful completion of this phase.

Secondly, it is of the utmost importance that TRIPOLI should be captured as rapidly as possible. It is essential once and for all to eliminate the Axis from North Africa; and with TRIPOLI in our hands, whether it is taken from the east or the west, the destruction of enemy forces who may still have escaped should present no difficulty.

FORCES REQUIRED AND TIME FACTOR.

2. Capture of TUNISIA

We shall press forward as hard and as fast as possible. The events of the next few days should enable us to form a clearer picture of the forces and the time which will be required to complete this phase, but it would be wrong at present to assume that the Axis forces, how estimated to be 12,000, will be rapidly destroyed, or that it will not be necessary to continue to reinforce the First Army in order to do so. I am in fact already moving eastward such portions of the 1st US Armored Division from ORAN as have already arrived here: we are doing everything possible to strengthen General Anderson's striking power.

Should things go well, however, I hope that it may be possible to complete the occupation of TUNISIA, as far south as GABES, by mid-December. On the other hand, it may take considerably longer and will not in any event be done without hard fighting.

Capture of TRIPOLI

3. The main factors which affect the timing and advance on TRIPOLI from the west and the forces required are:

(a) The date of completion of the occupation of TUNISIA.

(b) The strength of the Axis forces, remaining in TRIPOLI.

(c) The action which is being taken by Middle East forces.

(d) The time required to build up the reserves and transport considered necessary for the advance.

4. The timing clearly depends to a very great extent on 3 (a), above. The provisional dates which are mentioned below are based on the assumption that TUNISIA is occupied by mid-December and that the port and railway facilities in TUNISIA are taken over substantially intact.

5. The strength of Axis forces remaining in TRIPOLI in these circumstances is estimated at:

1 German division and one tank battalion.

1 Italian division.

100-150 single-engine fighters.

If these forces prove to be weaker than estimated, it will be possible to increase the speed of our advance, which will be conditioned by opposition actually encountered.

6. The action taken by Middle East forces will greatly influence the forces with which I would be prepared to begin the advance on TRIPOLI and the time at which the advance might begin. In my view, the best and quickest results would be obtained by simultaneous advances from the east and the west. Should Allied Forces have to undertake the operation without an advance in strength from the Middle East, it will be necessary to stage a deliberate operation. This will entail the building up of an advance base, communications and adequate reserves for the force required to deal single-handed with the Axis troops in TRIPOLI.

On the other hand, if Middle East Forces were to advance at the same time from BUERAT with one or two divisions, I would be prepared to take considerable administrative risk and to advance with weaker forces and fewer reserves.

Under the two hypotheses of:

(a) Simultaneous advance by Middle East Forces and Allied Forces,

(b) Main advance by Allied Forces, with merely a threat by the Middle East,

and subject to the proviso of para. 4,

the earliest dates upon which the advance from the GABES area could begin would be:

Hypothesis (a) Early February, with one Infantry and one Armored Division, of which probably not more than one-half could be maintained as far forward as TRIPOLI.

Hypothesis (b) Early March, with one Infantry and one Armored Division.

In either case, adequate air forces would be provided and established to support the advance.

These dates are considerably earlier than the estimates made by the First Army Staff, who studied the problem in great detail, before the Torch operation was launched. These estimates have been set forward in the belief that Axis forces in the vicinity of TRIPOLI, or between GABES and TRIPOLI, are not too well organized to oppose our advance eastward. Much of the time is required to collect and move forward the transportation essential for the carriage of supplies over the great distance involved.

SECURITY OF NORTH AFRICA

7. ALGERIA AND TUNISIA

In addition to the two divisions required for the advance to TRIPOLI, I estimate that a further two Infantry divisions will be needed for the protection of ALGERIA and TUNISIA. These divisions will be the 34th

United States and the 46th British Divisions, with one Armored division in general reserve for use anywhere in the TORCH Theater.

8. MOROCCO

I agree that immediate trouble with the Spaniards appears unlikely, but the security of the Straits of GIBRALTAR is so vital to the whole campaign in the Theater that I consider it essential to have in reserve adequate forces to occupy Spanish MOROCCO, plus those for internal security, before undertaking futher operations against SARDINIA or SICILY. The forces required for this purpose are five divisions (including one Armored), in addition to those in para. 7. (one of these would be stationed at ORAN).

9. Of the forces allocated to this Theater, I shall then have the following available for reinforcement where required or for other operations:

US -- Two Divisions.

British -- 11th Armored Division.
Two Divisions from Northern Task Force.
Royal Marine Division.

10. Time Factor.

On the shipping program worked out for the TORCH operation, the bulk of the forces in paras. 7 and 8, together with the necessary anti-aircraft and administrative services, would have arrived in the Theater early in February.

The shipping losses incurred during the past fortnight, and those which must be expected, together with the liability which the move eastward of the 12th Air Force presents, will considerably affect this date, and postpone the time at which shipping is likely to be available for other purposes.

On the other hand, the reduction of the total number of divisions to be used in North Africa from 13 to 10, thereby making three TORCH divisions available for other operations, does in fact release to operations against SARDINIA or SICILY the TORCH shipping that would normally have been required to transport these three divisions to North Africa.

OPERATIONS AGAINST SARDINIA OR SICILY

11. I appreciate the arguments in favor of going straight for SICILY rather than SARDINIA. Nevertheless, the latter should be the less difficult of the two operations, and the strategic advantages to be gained are very great.

I would, therefore, favor SARDINIA as the next objective after TRIPOLI, providing that the scale and nature of enemy reinforcements does not make the operation impracticable. In this connection, it is fair to assume that if SARDINIA is substantially reinforced, SICILY will also be.

SARDINIA

12. The forces required to undertake the SARDINIA operation are estimated to be of the order of:

(1) Naval Forces

4 Battleships

3 Aircraft Carriers

4 Auxiliary Aircraft Carriers

10 Cruisers

with complementary numbers of destroyers and escort vessels.

(2) Military

2 Inf Divs old model

1 Inf Div new model

1 Armd Division

1 Infantry Brigade

1 Parachute Brigade

8 Commandos

(3) Air Forces

12 Single-engine Fighter Sqns (320 aircraft)

what for?

12 Twin-engine Fighter Sqns (320 aircraft)

2 Fighter/Reconnaissance Sqns (36 aircraft)

2 Night Fighter Sqns (36 aircraft)

4 Light Bomber Sqns (72 aircraft)

8 Medium Bomber Sqns (114 aircraft)

12 Heavy Bomber Sqns (105 aircraft)

1 General Reconnaissance Squadron (18 aircraft)

2 Torpedo Bomber Squadrons (18 aircraft)

4 Transport Groups (208 aircraft)

(4) Shipping for the assault and first follow-up.

11 Large Infantry Assault Ships (combat loading)

10 Large (200 men) Infantry Assault Craft, or
1 Combat Loader (U.S. type).

4 Small Infantry Assault Ships.

9 Landing Ship Tank

3 Landing Ship Gantry.

15 Personnel Ships.

45 MT Ships.

9 Miscellaneous Ships (colliers, cased petrol, etc.)

(a) The Naval Forces represent a considerable reinforcement of those at present planned to be retained initially in the Western Mediterranean.

(b) The military requirements could be met by the forces at present allocated to BACKBONE (two divisions), 11th Armored Division, the Royal Marine Division, and one U.S. Infantry Division.

(c) The air forces can be provided by the 12th Air Force and Eastern Air Command, provided that the former is reinforced by one Twin-engine Fighter Group and one Transport Group. It will also be necessary to provide additional anti submarine forces for the Theater as a whole.

(d) The shipping commitment is a heavy one; while I cannot accept any material interference with the build up of the forces outlined in paragraphs 7 and 8, I would, as indicated in paragraph 10, be willing to release, for this operation, the shipping scheduled for the transport of the three further divisions in the shipping program.

13. Timing

As I have stated above, I consider that the provision of the forces and shipping required for an advance on TRIPOLI and for the security of North Africa should take priority over this operation. It seems likely, therefore, that shipping will prove to be the limiting factor in mounting the operation.

Apart from this, the next important limitation would be the move back to TUNISIA and the re-fitting of the air forces employed to support the advance to TRIPOLI. It is estimated that it would take 14 days after the capture of TRIPOLI to assemble the complete air forces required for the SARDINIAN operation. This would bring the earliest date upon which the air situation would allow the operation to be mounted to the end of March, on the assumption that a joint advance to TRIPOLI from east and west begins early in February.

If, however, it were decided that Allied Forces should not take part in the advance on TRIPOLI, the limiting factor (apart from shipping) would be the time taken to establish the necessary air forces in TUNISIA and ALGERIA. The governing factor here ix the construction of air fields: until the result of the survey at present in progress is known, it is not possible accurately to determine how long this will take; but the present estimate, allowing for construction and assembly followed by 14 days final intensive air preparation, is that the operation could be mounted early in March.

14. Mounting the operation.

I agree that the combat loaders should be loaded for the expedition in the United Kingdom or the United States, although it may be necessary for a portion of the forces to go direct from North Africa.

15. Practicability of the operation

From the time factor given above, it is clear that the Axis would have time to reinforce SARDINIA, if they propose to do so, unless action on our part prevents reinforcement arriving.

Preliminary examination of the problem shows that, if in fact substantial German reinforcements arrive, it is doubtful whether the assault would succeed. If, however, on the other hand, reinforcements are Italian, the operation may have a reasonable chance of success providing that a high degree of air control can be established. It is proposed, therefore, as soon as forces at my disposal permit, to attempt to interfere drastically by air and naval action with the arrival of reinforcements and supplies.

SICILY

16. No appreciation has yet been made by Allied Force Headquarters for the forces required for the capture of SICILY. The estimate made by the British Joint Planning Staff shows that it would require a great part of the combined resources of Middle East and Allied Forces in addition to powerful naval forces.

22nd November, 1942

Centre Red

54

PUNCH 151
TOO 1044Z/24
TOR 1148Z/24

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

MOST IMMEDIATE

From :- Mideast,

To :- Air Ministry.

A.O.C. PUNCH 967 24th Nov. 1942.

Personal for C.A.S. from Tedder.

Reference my A.O.C.952 22nd Nov. have not received reply but assuming affirmative and leaving for Malta to-night. Propose to go on to Gibraltar following night with view to meeting Eisenhower and Cunningham as suggested, possibly taking Park with me to ensure co-ordination between him and Welsh whom I hope to meet.

T.O.O. 1044Z/24

CIRCULATION.

S. of S.
C.A.S.
V.C.A.S.
A.C.A.S. (O)
A.C.A.S. (P)
D.O.OPS
D.D.P.O.
MIN. OF DEFENCE
C.N.S.
C.I.G.S.

A1Post/Henderson/11

56

SECRET.

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE.

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 324th Meeting.

Held on 23rd November 1942.

2. AIR OPERATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Punch 952 22/11

SIR CHARLES PORTAL stated that he had received a cable from Air Chief Marshal Tedder, who proposed to visit Malta and Gibraltar in order to discuss with the Governor and Commander in Chief, and with General Eisenhower, the co-ordination of policy for air operations throughout the Mediterranean. He would be accompanied by General Brereton, commanding the U.S. Air Forces in the Middle East.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Took note with approval of Air Chief Marshal Tedder's proposed visit and invited the Chief of the Air Staff to reply accordingly.

TO BE KEPT UNDER LOCK & KEY.

It is requested that special care may be taken to ensure the secrecy of this document.

(THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT)

S/C

SECRET

WAR CABINET

By direction of the Prime Minister, the attached telegram is circulated for the information of the Chiefs of Staff. Please return this copy to Defence Registry, War Cabinet Office, when no longer required.

(Signed) M.E. NORMAN

Great George Street,
S.W.1.

22nd November, 1942.

(Cypher) Chiefs of Staff

PRISEC

PERSONAL TELEGRAM

SERIAL No. T.1561/2

FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Sir M. Lampson,
No. 2621
November 21st, 1942

D. 12.21 a.m. November 22nd, 1942
R. 3.10 a.m. November 22nd, 1942

IMMEDIATE MOST SECRET

Following for the Prime Minister from Field Marshal Smuts:

1. Thank you for your signal of to-day and good news bulletin of offensive.

2. I arrived here this morning and had talks with the Ambassador and Alexander and Casey and afterwards (?gr.omit. ?attended) meeting of the Defence Council under Casey and gave them an account of the political and military situation in North Africa.

3. Alexander understands the Turkey Caucasus position fully and realises the importance of sending twenty air squadrons to the Caucasus and two hundred tanks to Turkey for the Spring operations. He will also have survey made immediately of enemy guns and ammunition captured in the recent operations which could be sent to the Turks.

4. Rommel appears likely to make a stand at Ageila which is a naturally favourable position well protected by the terrain on both flanks with bottle-neck entrance of about twenty miles. Alexander will endeavour to capture this position and make it an Allied bastion for the future which will render the Cyrenaica bulge untenable for the enemy in case he should attack again in future.

5. As regards Tripoli, Alexander thinks it must be a race between him and Eisenhower as to who will reach it first. He will do his best, especially if Ageila can be reduced soon, but the distance from Alexandria is 900 miles and Eisenhower may take Bizerta before Alexander takes Ageila and will also have a much shorter line of communications to Tripoli. I have no doubt Alexander will do his best.

6. Cat..... is here on his way to London at de G's request. Object is, no doubt, to discuss the North African position. Eisenhower and Cunningham informed me yesterday that the French leaders in North Africa, including Giraud, were very much opposed to any de G. movement there as likely to have detrimental consequences. It may therefore appear wise for us to recognize the present spheres of activity of the National French Committee and the Darlan-Giraud factions respectively and await some future rapprochement between them.

7. Tomorrow, Sunday, I propose to visit Tobruk and inspect various R.A.F. and South African Air Force units in the forward area and also the 1st South African Division and work-shop establishments in the Canal Zone. Monday 23rd morning early I shall fly to Pretoria. Spirit here could not be better and I am told this is also the case throughout the Middle East. Thank you very much for the loan of your aircraft which served me most admirably. Best of luck.
(OTP)

(Copies sent to Prime Minister)

File copy.

COPY NO. 10.

54

MOST SECRET

C.I.C.S.
FIRST SEA LORD
C.A.S.
C.C.O.

A/Pol/mideast/1

53

... Reference attached Telegram No. 217 from the President to the Prime Minister, the Prime Minister has minuted as follows -

"C.O.S. to see. A poor response.
(Intld.) W.S.C.
20/11"

(Sd) L. C. Hollis

20th November, 1942.

10 copies circulated as follows.
1/2 C.I.G.S. 3/4 First Sea Lord 5/6 CAS. 7/8 C.C.O.
9. General Ismay 10. File copy.

Enclosure:
Prime Minister's Personal Telegram No. T. 1540/2.

The Prime Minister has minuted on this telegram

"C.O.S. to see.

A poor response.

W. S. C.
20/XI ".

The above has just been telephoned from No 10. PD
20/XI.

No 195 = OZ 1914
= COS(42) 397 (O)

COPY

Brigadier Hollis 53

S/C

Prime Minister's Personal Telegram
Serial No. T. 1540/2.

Washington.
November 19, 1942.
2115 hours.

PRIORITY

PERSONAL AND SECRET

No. 217.

TO THE PRIME MINISTER

45

Reference your number 195 of November 18. The combined Chiefs of Staff are now studying the possibilities for future actions in the Mediterranean theatre, basing their studies on the following favourable and unfavourable assumptions and/or combination of both. The favourable assumptions are:

1. That Tunisia has been cleared of Axis troops.

2. That the British Eighth Army has reached Benghazi, but that the remnants of Rommel's force are still in being to the west of that place.

3. That the Spanish reactions to "TORCH" remain satisfactory.

4. That the lines of communication are secure.

The unfavourable assumptions are the converse of the favourable assumptions stated above. The combined Chiefs of Staff will consider the contents of your No. 195 of November 18 in connection with the studies on which they are no w engaged. Will tell you of their conclusions as soon as possible.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT.

4 cos(w) 351.

SECRET.

52

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE.

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 322nd Meeting.

Held on 20th November 1942.

9. FUTURE STRATEGY AND PLANNING

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(42)321st Mtg., Min 1) -49

J.S.M.487 -51

Reference was made to a personal telegram from Field Marshal Dill pointing out that the Americans might seek to reduce our quota of tanks on the grounds of the statement in the Minister of Defence's strategical review about surplus material in the Middle East.

SIR ALAN BROOKE said that, with the "Cannibalisation" of formations after the present battle in Libya, there would be sufficient surplus of tanks and certain equipment to begin the flow to Turkey. This would only be a temporary surplus, however, as further tanks and equipment would be required as we built up our strength again in the Middle East.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Took note of the above telegram from Field Marshal Dill, that a copy had been sent to the Prime Minister.

51

Unparaphrased version of a Secret Cypher Telegram
not One Time Table

IZ 2259
TOO 2309Z/19
TOR 0207Z/20

IMMEDIATE

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

From:- J.S.M. Washington

To:- Chiefs of Staff London

J.S.M. 487 19th Nov. 1942.

Personal from Field Marshal Dill.

Reference C.O.S.(W) 351. 45

1. This cable, which you sent me, will be of great value to us in combined discussions on strategy and particularly on more immediate action in Mediterranean. There is only one point which causes me serious concern, and that is the statement in para. 14.(b) that there is a surplus of material in Egypt.

2. As regards tanks, our figures show that M.E. possessed 2,293 at beginning of battle, of which more than 1,000 were in workshops. Of the latter, 532 were infantry tanks. Losses, as far as we know, have been about 500, a proportion of which will be repairable. In any case, there is obviously a deficiency in unit equipment and reserves in the M.E. and the armoured formations concerned will require full unit equipment and adequate reserves if they are to act in support of Turkey or elsewhere.

3. As you know, tank production here has fallen and release of medium tanks to us has presented great difficulty. The grave danger is that the Americans, with whom we have been having great trouble over tanks, will regard para. 14.(b) as a trump card and will accuse us of asking for tanks that are not operationally necessary.

4. Would it in any way be possible for the Prime Minister to make it clear to the President that tanks will still be necessary for our forces in the Middle East? We surely must have tanks to keep our formations tactically efficient. What we have in the Middle East is surplus forces for action in conjunction with Turkey or elsewhere and NOT surplus equipment.

T.O.O. 2309Z/19

Circulation.
Brig. Jacob.
C.I.G.S.
First Sea Lord.
C.A.S.
C.C.O.

50

Unparaphrased Version of Secret Cypher Telegram
not One Time Table

OZ 1929

TOO 1115z/19

TOD 1138z/19

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

MOST IMMEDIATE

COS(42)321st Mtg Item 1.

From:- Air Ministry

To:- Britman, Washington

OZ 1929 19th November 1942

Following for Field Marshal Dill from Chiefs of Staff No. C.O.S. (W) 356.

Reference our C.O.S. (W) 350. 44 Please insert following sentence in first paragraph between words "Prime Minister" and words "we are studying":-

Begins: "We are in general agreement with the principles of this note which was fully discussed at a meeting of the Defence Committee". Ends.

2. Object of this addition is to make it clear that there is no cleavage between political and military opinion in regard to the Prime Minister's note.

3. In the light of this explanation, Prime Minister wishes you to regard as cancelled the instructions contained in his personal telegram to you No. OZ 1928.

T.O.O. 1115z/19

mentioned in 48

Circulation

Brig. Jacob
First Sea Lord
C.I.G.S.
C.A.S.
C.C.O.

49

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 331st Meeting

Held on 19th November 1942

337

1. FUTURE STRATEGY AND PLANNING

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(42) 319th Meeting, Minute 1).

THE COMMITTEE referred to a telegram* which the Prime Minister had sent to Field Marshal Dill telling him to take no further action, pending further instructions, on the telegrams containing the text of the note on future strategy.

* NO. 02.1928 — mentioned on 48

C.O.S.(W) 350 & 351 — 44 & 45

GENERAL ISMAY explained why the Prime Minister had sent this telegram and read out the text of a further telegram which it was suggested should be sent to Sir John Dill instructing him to add a paragraph to C.O.S.(W) 350. With the despatch of this telegram, the Prime Minister's "Stand still" instructions could be regarded as cancelled.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Took note of General Ismay's statement and invited him to despatch a telegram† to Sir John Dill on the lines proposed.

† Sent as C.O.S. (W) 356

50

Brig. Hollis 48

OFFICE NOTE.

D.203/2 — 47

The Prime Minister spoke to me about this minute this morning and approved the despatch of an addition to COS(W)350 of 18th November which would:- 44

(i) Make it quite clear that there was no difference of opinion between political and military in this country: and

(ii) Inform Field Marshal Dill that he could now regard the Prime Minister's personal telegram No. OZ 1938 as cancelled.

H.L.I

19th November, 1942.

COPY

44

Prime Minister's Personal Minute
Serial No. D. 203/2.

(18

GENERAL ISMAY

44

I only glanced at your covering note this morning. There ought to be some sentence in it which indicates that the Staffs are not in disagreement in principle. As you have written this covering note, it looks as if there was division, whereas I have agreed to all the amendments of the Chiefs of the Staff.

I do not think this was a fair representation of the truth of what passed, and I am surprised when I come to read it attentively to see the division which it implies. I have telegraphed as follows to Field-Marshal Dill:-

You should not take any action or enter into any discussions upon this, pending further instructions.

(intd.) W. S. C.

19.11.42.

46

Unparaphrased version of a Secret Cypher Telegram
not One Time Table

OZ 1923
TOO 1914Z/18
TOD 1952Z/18

SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

IMMEDIATE

From:- Air Ministry

To:- Britman Washington

OZ 1923 18th Nov. 1942

DOTEL No. 528.

Form on the strategy front is as follows.

1. You will now have seen C.O.S.(W)351, 45 containing text of telegram which Prime Minister sent to President to show him how we are planning for next moves in Mediterranean and Middle East. Telegram is reproduction of "A Note by the Minister of Defence" and embodies amendments suggested by Chiefs of Staff.

2. As stated in opening paragraph, Minister of Defence's Note deals mainly with Mediterranean and Middle East area and does not cover world-wide strategy.

3. Chiefs of Staff's Review (C.O.S.(42)345(O)) was criticised at Defence Committee meeting on Monday because it was (i) too long, (ii) too negative, (iii) cold comfort for Russia in 1943, and (iv) too vague as to implications of 4 - 6,000 build-up of bomber force in U.K. by Spring of 1944.

4. In actual fact, there is no fundamental difference of opinion between Chiefs of Staff and Prime Minister. Review is now to be recast, shortened, balanced and emphasis shifted at some points. This process and steerage through Defence Committee must inevitably mean more delay and we cannot forecast delivery date.

5. Sorry that progress is so slow and tortuous.

T.O.O. 1914Z/18

Circulation.

Brigadier Jacob.

45

Unparaphrased version of a Secret
Cypher Telegram not One Time Table.

OZ. 1914.
TOO. 1210Z/18.
TOD. 1250Z/18.

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

IMMEDIATE

From: Air Ministry.

To: Britman, Washington.

OZ. 1914. 18th November, 1942.

Following for Field Marshal Dill from Chiefs of Staff No. COS(W)351.
Reference my immediately preceding 44 telegram.
Following is text of Note.

Begins.

1. In settling what to do in a vast war situation like this, it may sometimes be found better to take a particular major operation to which one is committed and follow that through vigorously to the end, making other things subordinate to it, rather than to assemble all the data from the whole world scene in a baffling array. After the needs of the major operation have been satisfied so far as possible, other aspects of the war will fall into their proper places. Moreover, it it by the continued stressing of the major operation that our will may be imposed upon the enemy and the initiative regained.

2. The paramount task before us is, first, to conquer the African shores of the Mediterranean and set up there the naval and air installations which are necessary to open an effective passage through it for military traffic; and secondly, using the bases on the African shore, to strike at the under-belly of the Axis in effective strength and in the shortest time.

3. There are therefore two phases - consolidation and exploitation. Dealing with consolidation first, we may hope that General Alexander will become master of the whole of Cyrenaica during the present month, and

/that he

month, and/

that he will be pressing the enemy in the Agheila position or even at Sirte. We may also assume that in the same period or not long after the American and British forces will become masters of the whole of French North Africa including Tunis, provided they press forward with their present energy and violence.

4. It will be necessary to set up Air stations at suitable intervals along all the African shore in our power, but particularly and urgently in the Tunis tip. The largest installations for American bombers ought to be set up here so that long-range bombers sent by the United States to North Africa, together with American bombers already based on the Middle East can operate against Italian targets. The United States form of daylight attack would have its best chance in the better weather of the Mediterranean.

5. The bombing weight of the British night attack should be brought to bear on Italy whenever the weather is more favourable than for bombing Germany. Every endeavour should be made to make Italy feel the weight of the war. All the industrial centres should be attacked in an intense fashion, every effort being made to render them uninhabitable and to terrorize and paralyze the population. I have asked for a scheme of desirable targets in Italy.

6. It will no doubt be necessary also to act against the Catania and Cagliari airfields so as to keep down the attack on Tunis in the period of consolidation.

7. As soon as we are sure of ourselves, and consolidated, in French North Africa, including especially Tunis, two successive operations present themselves. The first is the advance to Tripoli. It is possible that General Alexander may be able to take this important prize from the East, and I have asked him how he feels about it, and how long he thinks it would require; but we must also be prepared for a rapid advance from the West. Would General Anderson's two British Divisions be sufficient, assuming that Tunis itself can be held by American and French Allied troops? I should like the best possible estimate of the time that this will take.

8. The second immediate objective is obviously either Sardinia or Sicily. The possession of either of these Islands and of the airfields in the South

/would create

the South/

would create an Air triangle, in which we should fight for and secure Air mastery. Moreover from either of them continuous intensified short-range attacks on Naples, Rome, and the Italian fleet bases would raise the war against Italy to an intense degree. Let an immediate report be prepared in order that a decision can be taken. Whichever it may be, the fight for Air control in the Central Mediterranean should be undertaken as a great Air battle with extreme priority, the fullest advantage being taken of the Axis shortage of aircraft.

9. The swift success in French North Africa has completely changed the character of the problem which we had been bound to face in that region. We need no longer contemplate a protracted campaign against French in Algeria, nor immediate trouble with the Spaniards in Morocco. On the contrary, all is well in Algeria, and a French army will be coming into existence, fed by Allied munitions at our discretion. An examination should be made as to how the follow-up TORCH convoys can be drastically reduced and revised. Will the four British Divisions now in North Africa or under orders to go there be required for TORCH? It should be possible sensibly to reduce the "tail" of these divisions, thus saving escorts for other purposes, including, in the following order:-

(a) Sardinia or Sicily.

(b) Restoration of the British Trans-Atlantic convoys up to standard strength.

(c) Resumption of the P.Q. convoys in the latter part of December.

To facilitate these vital needs, and to provide the large Naval, particularly anti-submarine, forces which will be required, together with the necessary air forces, to secure a safe passage through the Mediterranean, **United** States Naval help will be urgently needed. Cannot the American Naval authorities reduce the strength of their follow-up trans-Atlantic convoys and can the American "tail" be reduced in the same way as I hope the British "tail" will be combed?

10. What are General Eisenhower's wishes about the force to attack Sardinia or Sicily? There are two British Divisions of the First Army, as well as the two others which are standing by. Is there any need to put the first two into North Africa? Can they not be combat loaded here? Are the

/losses among

Are the/

losses among our combat loaders crippling? How serious are they? There are great advantages and saving of time in going straight from the United Kingdom to the landings in Sardinia or Sicily. We must expect a steady reinforcement of both islands by the enemy, and speed will make our task definitely lighter. Note that the preparations to attack Sardinia may take as long as those to attack Sicily, and that Sicily is by far the greater prize.

Decisions on all the above are needed within the next week.

11. The relief and re-supplying of Malta should follow naturally from the operations now in progress or in prospect in the Central Mediterranean, and the immediate needs of the island are being dealt with on an effective scale. It would be well, when circumstances and shipping permit, to exchange the Units who have long been in the fortress for some of these who have been in the Desert, and vice versa.

12. I have received a telegram from the President containing the following paragraph:-

> "It is hoped that you with your Chiefs of Staff in London and I with the Combined Staff here may make a survey of the possibilities including forward movement directed against Sardinia, Sicily, Italy, Greece and other Balkan areas and including the possibility of obtaining Turkish support for an attack through the Black Sea against Germany's flank."

I endorse the above conception by the President. The first part of the President's wishes are being studied by the Combined Staffs in Washington, and are the subject of the foregoing paragraphs for our discussions.

13. The second part relating to Turkey is also of vital importance, though it is a slower process. A supreme and prolonged effort must be made to bring Turkey into the war in the Spring. We must expect that our naval forces and shipping, landing craft, etc. will be fully engaged in the Central Mediterranean, and that only minor amphibious facilities will be available in the Levant. Access can however be had to Turkey by

/the railways

Turkey by

the railways through Syria as well as by coastal shipping, and by a gradual build-up of Air protection not only Adalia but the Dardanelles itself might become open to supplies for Turkey. Troops can move by rail and road from Syria.

I wish to record my opinion that Turkey may be won if the proper measures are taken. Turkey is an Ally. She will wish to have a seat among the victors at the Peace Conference. She has a great desire to be well-armed. Her Army is in good order except for the specialized modern weapons, in which the Bulgarians have been given so great an advantage by the Germans. The Turkish Army has been mobilised for nearly three years, and is warlike. Hitherto Turkey has been restrained by fear from fulfilling her obligations, and we have taken an indulgent view of her policy on account of our own inability to help. The situation has now changed. By the destruction of Rommel's Army, large forces may presently become available in Egypt and Cyrenaica. By a strengthened Russian resistance and a possible counterstroke in the Caucasus, which we should urge upon the Russians with all emphasis, great easement will be secured in Persia and the Tenth Army may be drawn upon. There is also the Ninth Army in Syria. From all these sources it should be possible, on the assumption of the Russians maintaining themselves in the Caucasus north of the mountain line and holding the Caspian, to build up a powerful British land and air force to assist the Turks. A target date for the concentration should be April or May. Let me have proposals.

14. The following is the order of procedure, political and military:-

(a) Turkey should be offered a Russian-American-British guarantee of territorial integrity and status quo. The Russians have already agreed with us upon this. The addition of the United States would probably be a decisive reassurance. This should be followed by the despatch to Turkey of a strong Anglo-American Military Mission.

(b) All through the winter from now on, Turkey must be equipped from Egypt and from the United States with tanks, A/T and A.A. guns, and active construction of airfields must be undertaken. We have been working upon airfield construction in Turkey for two years.

/What progress

two years./

What progress has been made so far? Now that Rommel has been beaten, there is evidently a surplus of material in Egypt. We had over 2,500 tanks at the disposal of the Middle East Army. Much enemy material has been captured, both German and Italian. This is also true of A/T and A.A. guns. Experts must be provided to assist the Turks in learning to use and maintain this material. A ceaseless flow of weapons and equipment must go into Turkey. We have already promised a consignment, but the moment Turkey agrees secretly with the plan above, far greater quantities must be sent. What is the capacity of the railways from Syria to the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles? It would seem a great mistake to attack Rhodes and other islands in enemy hands in the Eastern Mediterranean until we have got Turkey on our side. Any attacks can then be supported by heavy shore-based Air power. We have to creep round this coast both by land and sea, building up our Air as we go.

(c) In conjunction with the above, we should urge the Russians to develop their strength on their southern flank, to try to clear the Caucasus, to regain Novorossisk and, above all, to resume at the earliest date their intentions explained to me by Premier Stalin, of striking south-west from the region north of Stalingrad towards Rostov on the Don. An ultimate result of these operations, if successful, would be the opening of the Dardanelles under heavy Air protection, to the passage of supplies to Russian Black Sea ports, and to any naval assistance the Russians might require in the Black Sea.

(d) Lastly, all being well we should assemble in Syria the British and Imperial forces mentioned in preceding paragraphs. Ends.

T.O.O. 1210Z/18.

(Circulation)

Brigadier Jacob.
First Sea Lord.
C.I.G.S.
C.A.S.
C.C.O.

SECRET.

To Mission Reporting for despatch 1215 18/11

444

TELEGRAM.

From: Air Ministry.

To: J.S.M. Washington.

IMMEDIATE.

COS(W)

For Field Marshal Dill from Chiefs of Staff No. 350.

Immediately following telegram 45 contains the
X→ text of a note which has been given to us by the Prime Minister. We are studying the implications of the various possibilities which it contemplates.

2. Prime Minister has sent a copy of this note to President and told him that the views of the British Chiefs of Staff will be forwarded to him as soon as possible. He also suggested that the President might find it convenient to let the Combined Chiefs of Staff see the note before their discussions since this would facilitate and hasten the agreement which we must reach between ourselves before a joint Anglo-American Mission is despatched to Moscow.

3. The comprehensive long-term appreciation will be sent as soon as it has been revised and approved by War Cabinet. This may not be for some little time.

X Text as in annexe to COS (42) 397 (O) despatched as COS (W) 351. 45

42

43

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 319th Meeting

Held on 18th November 1942

1. FUTURE STRATEGY AND PLANNING

(Reference: D.O.(42) 17th Meeting, Minute 2) — 40

THE COMMITTEE were informed that the Prime Minister had accepted the amendments put forward by the Chiefs of Staff to his Note on Mediterranean & Middle East plans and operations, and that it was now being circulated as a formal minute* addressed to the Chiefs of Staff. \ circulated as C.O.S.(42) 394(O) — 42

As the Prime Minister had telegraphed the contents of the Note to the President, it was suggested that it should be repeated to Field Marshal Dill for the information of the Joint Staff Mission, under cover of a telegram explaining the procedure which was now being adopted for arriving at a decision on future strategy.

THE COMMITTEE:-

(a) Instructed the Joint Planning Staff to take the Prime Minister's Minute into account when drafting their report in answer to the questionnaire formulated at the Staff Conference∅ at Chequers.
\ C.O.S.(42) 182nd Mtg (O) — 34 / sent as C.O.S.(W) 350 — 44

(b) Approved the terms of the telegram* to Field Marshal Dill explaining the procedure to be followed regarding the papers on future strategy.

(c) Instructed the Secretary to telegraph the text of the Prime Minister's note to the Joint Staff Mission[X]. \ Sent as C.O.S.(W) 351 — 45

Brigden Hattie

42

The attached paper has not been circulated. Copies are for handing out at C.O.S Mtg.
One copy of the note has been sent to General Smith by General Ismay.

Copies of a proposed telegram to F.M. Dill are also attached for C.O.S. approval.

Meanwhile the F.M's note is being encyphered to save time.

A new number has been allotted to the revised note. and no steps have been taken to withdraw C.O.S. (42) 392 (O), the original note. as presumably it should remain on record, having been the subject of discussion

L.H.I. 18/11

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

The circulation of this paper has been strictly limited.
It is issued for the personal use of Brig Hollis

TO BE KEPT UNDER LOCK AND KEY

It is requested that special care may be taken to ensure the secrecy of this document

MOST SECRET.

Copy No. 21

SIC
42

C.O.S.(42) 397 (O).

17TH NOVEMBER, 1942.

WAR CABINET.

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE.

FUTURE STRATEGY AND PLANNING

Note by the Secretary.

The attached copy+ of the final version of the Prime Minister's note on Future plans and operations in the Mediterranean, Middle East and Near East, is circulated to the Committee in substitution of the versions previously issued.

2. The Prime Minister has telegraphed the President that the Chiefs of Staff are considering the various possibilities contemplated in this note, and that he will report the results of their study as soon as possible.

(Signed) L.C. HOLLIS

Offices of the War Cabinet,
S.W.1.,

17TH NOVEMBER, 1942.

+ Annex

ANNEX

NOTE BY THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE TO THE CHIEFS OF STAFF ON PLANS AND OPERATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, MIDDLE EAST AND NEAR EAST

1. In settling what to do in a vast war situation like this, it may sometimes be found better to take a particular major operation to which one is committed and follow that through vigorously to the end, making other things subordinate to it, rather than to assemble all the data from the whole world scene in a baffling array. After the needs of the major operation have been satisfied so far as possible, other aspects of the war will fall into their proper places. Moreover, it is by the continued stressing of the major operation that our will may be imposed upon the enemy and the initiative regained.

2. The paramount task before us is, first, to conquer the African shores of the Mediterranean and set up there the naval and air installations which are necessary to open an effective passage through it for military traffic; and secondly, using the bases on the African shore, to strike at the under-belly of the Axis in effective strength and in the shortest time.

3. There are therefore two phases - consolidation and exploitation. Dealing with consolidation first, we may hope that General Alexander will become master of the whole of Cyrenaica during the present month, and that he will be pressing the enemy in the Agheila position or even at Sirte. We may also assume that in the same period or not long after the American and British forces will become masters of the whole of French North Africa including Tunis, provided they press forward with their present energy and violence.

4. It will be necessary to set up Air stations at suitable intervals along all the African shore in our power, but particularly and urgently in the Tunis tip. The largest installations for American bombers ought to be set up here so that long-range bombers sent by the United States to North Africa, together with American bombers already based on the Middle East can operate against Italian targets. The United States form of daylight attack would have its best chance in the better weather of the Mediterranean.

5. The bombing weight of the British night attack should be brought to bear on Italy whenever the weather is more favourable than for bombing Germany. Every endeavour should be made to make Italy feel the weight of the war. All the industrial centres should be attacked in an intense fashion, every effort being made to render them uninhabitable and to terrorize and paralyze the population. I have asked for a scheme of desirable targets in Italy.

6. It will no doubt be necessary also to act against the Catania and Cagliari airfields so as to keep down the attack on Tunis in the period of consolidation.

7. As soon as we are sure of ourselves, and consolidated, in French North Africa, including especially Tunis, two successive operations present themselves. The first is the advance to Tripoli. It is possible that General Alexander may be able to take this important prize from the East, and I have asked him how he feels about it, and how long he thinks it would require; but we must also be prepared for a rapid advance from the West. Would General Anderson's two British Divisions be sufficient, assuming that Tunis itself can be held by American and French Allied troops? I should like the best possible estimate of the time that this will take.

8. The second immediate objective is obviously either Sardinia or Sicily. The possession of either of these Islands and of the airfields in the South would create an Air triangle, in which we should fight for and secure Air mastery. Moreover from either of them continuous intensifield short-range attacks on Naples, Rome, and the Italian fleet bases would raise the war against Italy to an intense degree. Let an immediate report be prepared in order that a decision can be taken. Whichever it may be, the fight for Air control in the Central Mediterranean should be undertaken as a great Air battle with extreme priority, the fullest advantage being taken of the Axis shortage of aircraft.

9. The swift success in French North Africa has completely changed the character of the problem which we had been bound to face in that region. We need no longer contemplate a protracted campaign against French in Algeria, nor immediate trouble with the Spaniards in Morocco. On the contrary, all is well in Algeria, and a French army will be coming into existence, fed by Allied munitions at our discretion. An examination should be made as to how the follow-up TORCH convoys can be drastically reduced and revised. Will the four British Divisions now in North Africa or under orders to go there be required for TORCH? It should be possible sensibly to reduce the "tail" of these divisions, thus saving escorts for other purposes, including, in the following order:-

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To facilitate these vital needs, and to provide the large Naval, particularly anti-submarine, forces which will be required, together with the necessary air forces, to secure a safe passage through the Mediterranean, United States naval help will be urgently needed. Cannot the American Naval authorities reduce the strength of their follow-up trans-Atlantic convoys and can the American "tail" be reduced in the same way as I hope the British "tail" will be combed?

10. What are General Eisenhower's wishes about the force to attack Sardinia or Sicily? There are two British Divisions of the First Army, as well as the two others which are standing by. Is there any need to put the first two into North Africa? Can they not be combat loaded here? Are the losses among our combat loaders crippling? How serious are they? There are great advantages and saving of time in going straight from the United Kingdom to the landings in Sardinia or Sicily. We must

expect a steady reinforcement of both islands by the enemy, and speed will make our task definitely lighter. Note that the preparations to attack Sardinia may take as long as those to attack Sicily, and that Sicily is by far the greater prize.

Decisions on all the above are needed within the next week.

11. The relief and re-supplying of Malta should follow naturally from the operations now in progress or in prospect in the Central Mediterranean, and the immediate needs of the island are being dealt with on an effective scale. It would be well, when circumstances and shipping permit, to exchange the Units who have long been in the fortress for some of these who have been in the Desert, and vice versa.

12. I have received a telegram from the President containing the following paragraph:-

> "It is hoped that you with your Chiefs of Staff in London and I with the Combined Staff here may make a survey of the possibilities including forward movement directed against Sardinia, Sicily, Italy, Greece and other Balkan areas and including the possibility of obtaining Turkish support for an attack through the Black Sea against Germany's flank."

I endorse the above conception by the President. The first part of the President's wishes are being studied by the Combined Staffs in Washington, and are the subject of the foregoing paragraphs for our discussions.

13. The second part relating to Turkey is also of vital importance, though it is a slower process. A supreme and prolonged effort must be made to bring Turkey into the war in the Spring. We must expect that our naval forces and shipping, landing craft, etc. will be fully engaged in the Central Mediterranean, and that only minor amphibious facilities will be available in the Levant. Access can however be had to Turkey by the railways through Syria as well as by coastal shipping, and by a gradual build-up of Air protection not only Adalia but the Dardanelles itself might become open to supplies for Turkey. Troops can move by rail and road from Syria.

I wish to record my opinion that Turkey may be won if the proper measures are taken. Turkey is an Ally. She will wish to have a seat among the victors at the Peace Conference. She has a great desire to be well-armed. Her Army is in good order except for the specialized modern weapons, in which the Bulgarians have been given so great an advantage by the Germans. The Turkish Army has been mobilised for nearly three years, and is warlike. Hitherto Turkey has been restrained by fear from fulfilling her obligations, and we have taken an indulgent view of her policy on account of our own inability to help. The situation has now changed. By the destruction of Rommel's Army, large forces may presently become available in Egypt and Cyrenaica. By a strengthened Russian resistance and a possible counterstroke in the Caucasus, which we should urge upon the Russians with all emphasis, great easement will be secured in Persia and the Tenth Army may be drawn upon. There is also the Ninth Army in Syria. From all these sources it should be possible, on the assumption of the Russians maintaining themselves in the Caucasus north of the mountain line and holding the Caspian, to build up a powerful British land and airforce to assist the Turks. A target date for the concentration should be April or May. Let me have proposals.

14. The following is the order of procedure, political and military:-

(a) Turkey should be offered a Russian-American-British guarantee of territorial integrity and status quo. The Russians have already agreed with us upon this. The addition of the United States would probably be a decisive reassurance. This should be followed by the despatch to Turkey of a strong Anglo-American Military Mission.

(b) All through the winter from now on, Turkey must be equipped from Egypt and from the United States with tanks, A/T and A.A. guns, and active construction of airfields must be undertaken. We have been working upon airfield construction in Turkey for two years. What progress has been made so far? Now that Rommel has been beaten, there is evidently a surplus of material in Egypt. We had over 2,500 tanks at the disposal of the Middle East Army. Much enemy material has been captured, both German and Italian. This is also true of A/T and A.A. guns. Experts must be provided to assist the Turks in learning to use and maintain this material. A ceaseless flow of weapons and equipment must go into Turkey. We have already promised a consignment, but the moment Turkey agrees secretly with the plan above, far greater quantities must be sent. What is the capacity of the railways from Syria to the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles? It would seem a great mistake to attack Rhodes and other islands in enemy hands in the Eastern Mediterranean until we have got Turkey on our side. Any attacks can then be supported by heavy shore-based Air power. We have to creep round this coast both by land and sea, building up our Air as we go.

(c) In conjunction with the above, we should urge the Russians to develop their strength on their southern flank, to try to clear the Caucasus, to regain Novorossisk and, above all, to resume at the earliest date their intentions explained to me by Premier Stalin, of striking south-west from the region north of Stalingrad towards Rostov on the Don. An ultimate result of these operations, if successful, would be the opening of the Dardanelles under heavy Air protection, to the passage of supplies to Russian Black Sea ports, and to any naval assistance the Russians might require in the Black Sea.

(d) Lastly, all being well we should assemble in Syria the British and Imperial forces mentioned in preceding paragraphs.

Pl return to Mr. Jones. SIC 41E

17th November, 1942.

SECRET.

My dear Bedell. 41A

On the Prime Minister's instructions, I send you herewith a revised copy of the note on Future Strategy in the Mediterranean and Middle East in substitution of the original which I believe the Prime Minister handed you last week.

2. The Chiefs of Staff are studying the implications of the various possibilities contemplated in this note.

3. The Prime Minister has sent a copy of this note to the President with the suggestion that he might let the Combined Chiefs of Staff see it.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) I.S.O. Ismay.

Brigadier General W. Bedell Smith,
U.S. Army,
Allied Force Headquarters.

41D

SECRET.

PRIME MINISTER.

41A

I have rechecked the note at Flag "A", and am sure that the Chiefs of Staff would be in entire agreement with the few corrections and additions which you have made.

2. I submit for your consideration a draft telegram to the President (Flag "D"). — 41C A/Strat/2

3. You told Field Marshal Dill in your OZ.1873 of the 12th November (Flag "C") that we hoped "to have an up-to-date appreciation ready early next week". I submit that the note at Flag "A" should now be sent to him with instructions that the Joint Staff Mission are to use it as a basis for their discussions on the immediate future with the American Chiefs of Staff. An explanation could be added that a comprehensive long-term appreciation will be sent to him as soon as it is ready.

(Signed) H. L. ISMAY.

17th November, 1942.

D 41C

FORMER NAVAL PERSON TO PRESIDENT.
Personal and Secret.

A/SCtaf/2

Your 210 and 211. D/Russia/1

As promised in Paragraph 2 of my 189, I am sending you in my immediately following telegram the text of a note which I have given to the British Chiefs of Staff.

2. The Chiefs of Staff are in general agreement with this note and are busily engaged in studying the implications of the various possibilities which it contemplates. I will send you the results as soon as possible.

3. Meanwhile you might find it convenient to let the Combined Chiefs of Staff work on my note as a basis of their discussions. This would facilitate and hasten the agreement which we must reach between ourselves before we send a joint Mission to Moscow.

RETURN TO DEFENCE REGISTRY

41 B

Pm/409.

SECRET

PRIME MINISTER

41A

The Note at Flag 'A' includes all the amendments which the Chiefs of Staff suggested, and you accepted, at the meeting of the Defence Committee last night.

2. Your original Note is at Flag 'B'.

32

(Signed) H. L. Ismay.

17th November, 1942.

41A

MOST SECRET

FINAL
AT
(42)

NOTE BY THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE TO THE CHIEFS OF STAFF ON PLANS AND OPERATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, MIDDLE EAST AND NEAR EAST

In settling what to do in a vast war situation like this, it may sometimes be found better to take a particular major operation to which one is committed and follow that through vigorously to the end, making other things subordinate to it, rather than to assemble all the data from the whole world scene in a baffling array. After the needs of the major operation have been satisfied so far as possible, other aspects of the war will fall into their proper places. Moreover, it is by the continued stressing of the major operation that our will may be imposed upon the enemy and the initiative regained.

2. The paramount task before us is, first, to conquer the African shores of the Mediterranean and set up there the naval and air installations which are

necessary to open an effective passage through it for military traffic; and secondly, using the bases on the African shore, to strike at the under-belly of the Axis in effective strength and in the shortest time.

3. There are therefore two phases - consolidation and exploitation. Dealing with consolidation first, we may hope that General Alexander will become master of the whole of Cyrenaica during the present month, and he will be pressing the enemy in the Agheila position or even at Sirte. We may also assume that in the same period the American and British forces will become masters of the whole of French North Africa including Tunis, provided they press forward with their present energy and violence.

4. It will be necessary to set up Air stations at suitable intervals along all the African shore in our power, but particularly and urgently in the Tunis tip. The largest installations for American bombers must be set up here so that long-range bombers sent by the United States to North Africa, together with American bombers already based on the Middle East can operate against

Italian targets. The United States form of daylight attack would have its best chance in the better weather of the Mediterranean.

5. The bombing weight of the British night attack should be brought to bear on Italy whenever the weather is more unfavourable than for bombing Germany. Every endeavour should be made to make Italy feel the weight of the war. All the industrial centres should be attacked in an intense fashion, every effort being made to render them uninhabitable and to terrorize and paralyze the population. I have asked for a scheme of desirable targets in Italy.

6. It will no doubt be necessary also to act against the Catania and Cagliari airfields so as to keep down the attack on Tunis in the period of consolidation.

7. As soon as we are sure of ourselves, and consolidated, in French North Africa, including especially Tunis, two successive operations present themselves. The first is the advance to Tripoli. It is possible that General Alexander may be able to take this important prize from the East, and I have asked him how he feels

about it, and how long he thinks it would require; but we must also be prepared for a rapid advance from the West. Would General Anderson's two British Divisions be sufficient, assuming that Tunis itself can be held by American and French Allied troops? I should like the best possible estimate of the time that this will take.

8. The second immediate objective is obviously either Sardinia or Sicily. The possession of either of these Islands and of the airfields in the South would create an Air triangle, in which we should fight for and secure Air mastery. Moreover from either of them continuous intensified short-range attacks on Naples, Rome, and the Italian fleet bases would raise the war against Italy to an intense degree. Let an immediate report be prepared in order that a decision can be taken. Whichever it may be, the fight for Air control in the Central Mediterranean should be undertaken as a great Air battle with extreme priority, the fullest advantage being taken of the Axis shortage of aircraft.

9. The swift success in French North Africa has completely changed the character of the problem which we

had been bound to face in that region. We need no longer contemplate a protracted campaign against French in Algeria, nor immediate trouble with the Spaniards in Morocco. On the contrary, all is well in Algeria, and a French army will be coming into existence, fed by Allied munitions at our discretion. An examination should be made as to how the follow-up TORCH convoys can be drastically reduced and revised. Will the four British Divisions now in North Africa or under orders to go there be required for TORCH? It should be possible sensibly to reduce the "tail" of these divisions, thus saving escorts for other purposes, including, in the following order:-

(a) Sardinia or Sicily

(b) Restoration of the British Trans-Atlantic convoys up to standard strength.

(c) Resumption of the P.Q. convoys in the latter part of December.

To facilitate these vital needs, and to provide the large Naval, particularly anti-submarine, forces which will be required, together with the necessary air forces, to secure a safe passage through the Mediterranean,

United States naval help will be urgently needed. Cannot the American Naval authorities reduce the strength of their follow-up trans-Atlantic convoys and can the American "tail" be reduced in the same way as I hope the British "tail" will be pruned?

10. What are General Eisenhower's wishes about the force to attack Sardinia? There are two British Divisions of the First Army, as well as the two others which are standing by. Is there any need to put the first two into North Africa? Can they not be combat loaded here? Are the losses among our combat loaders crippling? How serious are they? There are great advantages and saving of time in going straight from the United Kingdom to the landings in Sardinia. We must expect a steady reinforcement of Sardinia by the enemy, and speed will make our task definitely lighter.

Decisions on all the above are needed within the next week.

11. The relief and re-supplying of Malta should follow naturally from the operations now in progress or in prospect in the Central Mediterranean, and the immediate

needs of the island are being dealt with on an effective scale. It would be well, when circumstances and shipping permit, to exchange the Units who have long been in the fortress for some of those who have been in the Desert, and vice versa.

12. I have received a telegram from the President containing the following paragraph:-

> "It is hoped that you with your Chiefs of Staff in London and I with the Combined Staff here may make a survey of the possibilities including forward movement directed against Sardinia, Sicily, Italy, Greece and other Balkan areas and including the possibility of obtaining Turkish support for an attack through the Black Sea against Germany's flank."

I endorse the above conception by the President. The first part of the President's wishes are being studied by the Combined Staffs in Washington, and are the subject of the foregoing paragraphs for our discussions.

13. The second part relating to Turkey is also of vital importance, though it is a slower process. A supreme and prolonged effort must be made to bring Turkey into the war in the Spring. We must expect that

our naval forces and shipping, landing craft, etc. will be fully engaged in the Central Mediterranean, and that only minor amphibious facilities will be available in the Levant. Access can however be had to Turkey by the railways through Syria as well as by coastal shipping, and by a gradual build-up of Air protection not only Adalia but the Dardanelles itself might become open to supplies for Turkey. Troops can move by rail and road from Syria.

I wish to record my opinion that Turkey may be won if the proper measures are taken. Turkey is an Ally. She will wish to have a seat among the victors at the Peace Conference. She has a great desire to be well-armed. Her Army is in good order except for the specialized modern weapons, in which the Bulgarians have been given so great an advantage by the Germans. The Turkish Army has been mobilised for nearly three years, and is warlike. Hitherto Turkey has been restrained by fear from fulfilling her obligations, and we have taken an indulgent view of her policy on account

of our own inability to help. The situation has now changed. By the destruction of Rommel's Army, large forces may presently become available in Egypt and Cyrenaica. By a strengthened Russian resistance and a possible counterstroke in the Caucasus, which we should urge upon the Russians with all emphasis, great easement will be secured in Persia and the Tenth Army may be drawn upon. There is also the Ninth Army in Syria. From all these sources it should be possible, on the assumption of the Russians maintaining themselves in the Caucasus north of the mountain line and holding the Caspian, to build up a powerful land and air force to assist the Turks. A target date for the concentration should be April or May. Let me have proposals.

14. The following is the order of procedure, polital and military:-

(a) Turkey should be offered a Russian-American-British guarantee of territorial integrity and status quo. The Russians have already agreed with us upon this. The addition of the United States would probably be a decisive reassurance. This should be followed by the

despatch to Turkey of a strong Anglo-American Military Mission.

(b) All through the winter from now on, Turkey must be equipped from Egypt and from the United States with tanks, A/T and A.A. guns, and active construction of airfields must be undertaken. We have been working upon airfield construction in Turkey for two years. What progress has been made so far? Now that Rommel has been beaten, there is evidently a great surplus of material in Egypt. We had over 2,500 tanks at the disposal of the Middle East Army. Much enemy material has been captured, both German and Italian. This is also true of A/T and A.A. guns. Experts must be provided to assist the Turks in learning to use this material. A ceaselss flow of weapons and equipment must go into Turkey. We have already promised a consignment, but the moment Turkey agrees secretly with the plan above, far greater quantities must be sent. What is the capacity of the railways from Syria to the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles? It would seem a great mistake to attack Rhodes and other islands in enemy hands in the Eastern Mediterranean until

we have got Turkey on our side. Any attacks can then be supported by heavy shore-based Air power. We have to creep round this coast both by land and sea, building up our Air as we go.

(c) In conjunction with the above, we should urge the Russians to develop their strength on their southern flank, to try to clear the Caucasus, to regain Novorossisk and, above all, to resume at the earliest date their intentions explained to me by Premier Stalin, of striking south-west from the region north of Stalingrad towards Rostov on the Don. An ultimate result of these operations, if successful, would be the opening of the Dardanelles under heavy Air protection, to the passage of supplies to Russian Black Sea ports, and to any naval assistance the Russians might require in the Black Sea.

(d) Lastly, all being well we should assemble in Syria the British and Imperial forces mentioned in preceding paragraphs.

40

Extract from D.O.(42) 17th Meeting Minute 2.

Held on 16th November, 1942. Full minute on A/Strategy/2

2. FUTURE STRATEGY.

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(42) 181st Meeting (O).

A/Strategy/2

x x x x

Prime Minister's Note on Mediterranean Strategy.

THE COMMITTEE then considered the Chiefs of Staff comments on the Prime Minister's Note+ on Future Strategy.

'30 '32

SIR ALAN BROOKE stressed the importance of getting the Turks to agree to receive a mission of technical experts to ensure that the equipment with which we proposed to supply them was properly used and cared for.

MR. ATTLEE suggested that the time had come for the preparation of an appreciation of the psychological position in Italy.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that he was quite prepared to accept all the amendments to his Note suggested by the Chiefs of Staff. He proposed to telegraph the revised version of the Note, which would take the form of a minute to the Chiefs of Staff, to the President and to inform him that the points raised were under urgent consideration by the Chiefs of Staff.

THE COMMITTEE:-

(a) Invited the Chiefs of Staff to reconsider their report on Future Strategy in the light of the above discussion;

(b) Took note that the Prime Minister would send to President Roosevelt a copy of the revised Note on Future Strategy which he was addressing to the Chiefs of Staff for their consideration. 41C

+ C.O.S.(42) 392 (O) 32

SECRET.

Defence Committee (Operations)

~~PACIFIC WAR COUNCIL.~~

Extract from ~~P.W.C.~~ D.O.(42) 17th Meeting.

Held on 16th November 1942.

3. EXTENSION OF "SINK-AT-SIGHT ZONE" IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

THE PRIME MINISTER referred to a minute+ which he had received from the First Lord asking for approval for a proposal put forward by Admiral Cunningham that the Mediterranean "sink-at-sight zone" should be extended to include all the western basin, except Spanish territorial waters and an area sufficient to give the Spaniards reasonable access to the Balearics.

+ annex - 38

MR. EDEN said that he had no objection to the proposed declaration being made at an early date.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Approved the Admiralty proposal for the extension of the "sink-at-sight zone" in the Western Mediterranean, and invited the First Lord to initiate procedure for giving effect to his proposals.

ANNEX.

First Lord

Copy to: First Sea Lord

EXTENSION OF MEDITERRANEAN SINK-AT-SIGHT TO FRANCO-SPANISH BORDER

Admiral Cunningham in his 1303/14 has asked that the Mediterranean sink-at-sight zone should be extended to include all the Western Basin except Spanish territorial waters and an area sufficient to give the Spaniards reasonable access to the Balearics.

2. The existing zone is, roughly speaking, all the waters of the Mediterranean east of a line drawn from Cape Bon in Tunis to a point 30 miles south of Sardinia, thence west of Sardinia 30 miles from the coast until the northern-most point of the island and then eastwards to a point 30 miles from the Italian coast, and thereafter 30 miles from the coast to the Franco-Italian border. In short, Sardinia and the waters 30 miles from the Italian coast are enclosed within the zone but no Corsica or waters off the French coast.

3. If the Foreign Secretary agreed we were ourselves about to propose to Admiral Cunningham that the existing zone should be extended so as to include approximately all the waters east of a line drawn from the Franco-Spanish border to a point 20 miles east of Minorca, and thence due south to the Algerian coast, meeting it just West of Bougie.

4. Our reasons for the extension are:-

(a) the need to give our submarines in what is now an operational area freedom to attack any ship whose movements have not previously been notified and approved. Our submarines will be operating within range of enemy air bases in France and Corsica and must be given the maximum liberty of action.

(b) the desire to cut off Spanish ships from commerce with France and Italy unless engaged upon voyages specially approved by us and notified to our submarines. We have found that the declaration of a danger zone in the Bay of Biscay has been extremely effective in preventing Spanish ships from sailing to enemy occupied ports.

5. The zone which we propose is perhaps less extensive than that which may be contemplated by N.C.X.F., but it gives us all the freedom of action required and effectively isolates Spanish ships from enemy occupied ports. For political reasons it is desirable to give the Spaniards as much sea-room as is consistent with our needs. Moreover, we may hereafter wish to encourage a measure of trade between Spain and Algeria.

6. On 23rd June, 1941, we did, in fact, obtain Cabinet approval for the declaration for a sink-at-sight zone in the event of war with Vichy (W.P.(41) 134). That zone ran from the Franco-Spanish border to the same point 20 miles east of Minorca and then to a point 20 miles due south of Cape de Gata in Spain and then to the African coast at the Algerian-Moroccan border. This was drawn on the assumption that North Africa would not be in our hands and in present circumstances a zone drawn so close to Spain is considered unnecessary and undesirable.

7. The proposed zone will not affect existing arrangements for neutral ships to proceed to enemy occupied ports with cargoes for Switzerland or for the Red Cross. These ships will, as formerly, require Navicerts and Safe Conducts, travel on agreed routes and notify their sailings. The Foreign Secretary will probably ask, however, for an opportunity to give the Spanish and Swiss Governments 24 hours advance notice of our declaration in order to prepare them for our action and explain that it will not affect their legitimate interests.

8. I attach a draft of the signal* which it is proposed to send to N.C.X.F. if the Cabinet accept our proposals.

9. The Foreign Office have been consulted informally on the telephone and have intimated that they are unlikely to have any objection to the proposed declaration or to it being made at a very early date. They will wish, however, to submit the points to the Secretary of State if possible before the Cabinet meets and I am therefore sending them a copy of this note in advance. It is assumed that N.C.X.F. has consulted General Eisenhower.

* Enclosure to Annex

ENCLOSURE TO ANNEX

Draft Signal

N.C.X.F. (R) C. in C., Mediterranean
F.O.I.C., Gibraltar
V.A., Malta.

SECRET IMPORTANT November, 1942.

From Admiralty.

Your 1303/14. We were ourselves about to propose that a notice should be broadcast in the following terms:-

Begins: "The German and Italian Governments, having set aside the Armistice with France and occupied the Mediterranean Coast, the U.S. Government and H.M.G. are compelled to amplify the previous notices which have declared certain areas in the Mediterranean dangerous to shipping. Accordingly, they now give notice that all waters in the

Mediterranean excluding Turkish territorial waters are dangerous to shipping to the east of the following line:-

> From the Franco-Spanish border along the edge of Spanish territorial waters to a point 3 miles 090 degrees from Cape de Creus (42 degrees 19 minutes north 03 degrees 19 minutes east approx.); thence to 39 degrees 46 minutes north 04 degrees 50 minutes east; and thence 180 degrees to the Algerian Coast.

Any vessel entering this area without the permission of the Allied authorities will do so at its risk and peril." - Ends.

2. For political reasons it is desirable to give the Spaniards as much sea-room as is consistent with our requirements, and in future we may wish to encourage a measure of trade between Spain and Algeria.

3. The appropriate procedure will be for broadcasts to be made from Algiers and Gibraltar, followed by announcement by the B.B.C. Foreign Office think it essential that Spanish Government should be informed at least 24 hours in advance of the broadcasts.

4. If therefore you concur in the terms of the notice in paragraph 1 you should report the time fixed for the broadcasts, allowing us if possible 48 hours in which to inform Spanish Government.

5. After the broadcast announcement, aircraft, surface ships and submarines may be instructed to attack at sight any vessel navigating within the extended zone without our permission. It is assumed, however, that voyages of ships sailing under safe conduct with cargoes for the Red Cross or Swiss Government will not be affected and that you will promulgate these sailings as necessary.

M. Branch. (86)

File Copy.

34

12 copies of minute typed & 12 copies of Enclosure rolled.
Circulated as follows.

1.} C.I.C.S.
2.}
3.} 1st Sea Lord
4.}
5.} C.A.S.
6.}
7.} C.C.O.
8.}
9. ~~for Immediate~~ File.
10. Gen. Ismay.
11.
12. Cdr Price

COPY NO. 9.

MOST SECRET

C.I.C.S.
FIRST SEA LORD
C.A.S.
C.C.O.

36 35

In accordance with the instructions of the Chiefs of Staff at the meeting this morning, I attach two copies of a Note comprising a commentary on, and proposed amendments to, the Minister of Defence's Memorandum on Future Plans and Operations.

2. The Chiefs of Staff are reminded that it was arranged that they should meet at 9.30 tonight, Monday, 16th November, in the Cabinet War Room (basement) prior to the meeting of the Defence Committee at 10 o'clock.

3. The Prime Minister has now said that the discussion at tonight's Defence Committee will be confined to his Memorandum only, since he wishes to discuss personally with the Chiefs of Staff his proposed amendments to the Chiefs of Staff Strategical Review.

(Sgd) L. C. HOLLIS

16th November, 1942.

TO BE KEPT UNDER LOCK & KEY.
It is requested that special care may be taken to ensure the secrecy of this document.

MOST SECRET COPY NO. 11

Annex 42

PRIME MINISTER COS (42) 347 (O)

32

We assume that it is your intention to make your Note a Directive to the Chiefs of Staff, and to send a copy of it to the President in order that he may see the general lines on which we are working in London. It is on this basis that the following comments and suggested amendments have been framed. Meanwhile, we are studying the questions posed in your Note, together with those which emerged at yesterday's Conference at Chequers, and we will submit replies as soon as possible.

PARAGRAPH 1 - No comments

PARAGRAPH 2

Comments

We think that it should be made clear that an effective passage through the Mediterranean, for military traffic, cannot be secured until considerable naval and air establishments have been installed.

Suggested Amendment

We therefore suggest that the first sentence of this paragraph should read -

> "The paramount task before us is, first, to conquer the African shores of the Mediterranean and set up there the naval and air installations which are necessary to open an effective passage through it for military traffic".

NOTE. We are not quite clear what is meant by "striking at the under belly of the Axis". Have you in mind air bombardment or a combined operation against the mainland of Europe?

PARAGRAPH 3

Comment

We think it may be slightly optimistic to "assume" that General Alexander will become master of the whole of Cyrenaica during the present month.

Suggested amendment

We suggest the substitution of the word "hope" for the word "assume".

PARAGRAPHS 4 & 5

Comments

We think that the principal target of the Metropolitan Bomber Force should continue to be Germany, and that only on nights when weather precludes operations against Germany, should it be used against Italy. We do not like the idea of any considerable portion of this Force being operated from North African airfields; and in any case this would not be possible for some considerable time. Thus, as we see it, the position as regards bombing Italy is as follows:-

(1) Bomber Command from its home bases can bring a considerable scale of attack to bear on the cities of Northern Italy, e.g. Genoa, Turin, Milan.

(2) As soon as Malta is re-stocked with fuel, Middle East bombers can attack Rome, Naples, Brindisi.

(3) As soon as airfields in Tunisia and Algeria over and above those required for support of the land battle in Tunisia and for the defence of the Tunisian bases can be provided and stocked, American heavy bombers can be used against Genoa, Rome, Naples, etc.

The preparation and stocking of airfields will take a considerable time (probably up to three months). Until then, and possibly afterwards, it will be most uneconomical to move to Africa the large amount of equipment and personnel required to operate British Heavy Bombers.

Suggested Amendments.

In the light of the above, we suggest that paragraphs 4 and 5 should be amended as follows:-

Paragraph 4

The second sentence should read -

"The largest installations for American bombers must be set up here so that long-range bombers sent by the United States to North Africa, together with American bombers already based on the Middle East can operate against Italian targets."

Paragraph 5

Omit first sentence.

Second sentence should read -

"The bombing weight of the British night attack should be brought to bear on Italy whenever the weather is more favourable than ~~unfavourable~~ for bombing Germany".

PARAGRAPH 6 - No comments.

PARAGRAPH 7

Comment

(a) We do not think that the operations against Tripoli and Sardinia (or Sicily) are likely to be simultaneous.

(b) The questions -

(i) Whether the capture of Tripoli should be undertaken by General Eisenhower or General Alexander, or both;

(ii) The forces that they will require; and

(iii) The time that these operations will take

are dependent on factors which cannot be assessed in London and on the developments in Tunis and Cyrenaica during the next few days. You have yourself telegraphed to General Alexander (OZ 1896 of 15th November) asking him these questions. But, whatever may be his reply, we agree that General Anderson should be prepared to push on towards Tripoli as fast as possible.

Suggested Amendment

In the light of the above, we suggest this paragraph should read as follows:-

"As soon as we are sure of ourselves, and consolidated in French North Africa, including especially Tunisia, two successive operations present themselves. The first is the advance to Tripoli. It is possible that General Alexander may be able to take this important prize from the East, and I have asked him how he feels about it, and how long he thinks it would require: but we must also be prepared for a rapid advance from the West. Would General Anderson's two British Divisions be sufficient, assuming that Tunis itself can be held by American and French Allied troops? I should like the best possible estimate of the time that this will take.

PARAGRAPH 8

Comment

It was agreed at yesterday's Conference that Sicily might be a preferable objective to Sardinia. This is being carefully examined.

Suggested Amendment.

We suggest that this paragraph should be amended to read as follows:-

> "The second immediate objective is obviously either Sardinia or Sicily. The possession of either of these islands and of the air fields in the south would create an air triangle in which we should fight for and secure air mastery. Moreover from either of them continuous intensified short-range attacks on Naples, Rome and the Italian fleet bases would raise the war against Italy to an intense degree. Let an immediate report be prepared in order that a decision can be taken. Whichever it may be, the fight for air control in the Central Mediterranean should be undertaken as a great air battle with extreme priority, the fullest advantage being taken of the Axis shortage of aircraft".

PARAGRAPH 9

Comments

(a) While we agree that we need not anticipate protracted French resistance in North Africa, we cannot yet assess the degree of German resistance which will have to be overcome in Tunis.

(b) We think that the existence of a "powerful" French Army in North Africa might in present circumstances be more of an embarrassment than an asset, and that the build-up of French forces with Allied equipment, which can only be provided at the expense of our own requirements, should be dependent on how the French make common cause with us.

(c) In accordance with your instructions at the Staff Conference on Sunday, General Smith and General Gale are examining as a matter of urgency the scale of the follow-up TORCH convoys, and the means whereby the L. of C. troops for the four British Divisions can be pruned.

(d) As regards assistance by the United States in providing Naval escorts, we point out that to secure the vital needs set out in (a), (b) and (c) of your Note a very considerable measure of American help will be required. Nevertheless, we think that the passages at the end of paragraph 9, as drafted, might be a little offending to American susceptibilities. Moreover, in view of the considerable Naval forces required to secure the safe passage of traffic through the Mediterranean, it may well be that a contribution of 20 U.S. destroyers would not be enough for our purpose.

Suggested Amendment

The swift success in French North Africa has completely changed the character of the problem which we had been bound to face in that region. We need no longer contemplate a protracted campaign against French forces in Algeria, nor immediate trouble with the Spaniards in Morocco. On the contrary, all is well in Algeria and a French army will be coming into existence fed by Allied munitions as they can be spared.

An examination should be made as to how the follow-up TORCH convoys can be drastically reduced and revised. Will the four British Divisions now in North Africa or under orders to go there be required for TORCH? It should be possible sensibly to reduce the "tail" of these divisions, thus saving escorts for other purposes, including, in the following order:-

(a) Sardinia or Sicily

(b) Restoration of the British trans-Atlantic convoys up to standard strength.

(c) Resumption of the P.Q. convoys loaded in December.

To facilitate these vital needs, and to provide the large Naval, particularly anti-submarine, forces which will be required, together with the necessary air forces, to secure a safe passage through the Mediterranean, United States naval help will be urgently needed. Cannot the American Naval authorities reduce the strength of their follow-up trans-Atlantic convoys and can the American "tail" be reduced in the same way as I hope the British "tail" will be pruned?

PARAGRAPH 10

Comment

All the questions posed in this paragraph are under urgent examination. We hope to hear General Eisenhower's plans from his British Liaision Officer, Colonel Stirling, who is due in London today, 16th November. Copies of the 1941 Sardinia Plans, as well as an outline plan prepared by the Joint Staffs last month, have been sent to you.

Suggested Amendment.

We suggest that paragraph 10 should stand, with the omission of the sentence in which you ask to see the plan made by the British Staffs more than a year ago, for the attack on Sardinia.

PARAGRAPH 11

Comment

We suggest that a "forward movement directed against Sardinia, Sicily, Italy, Greece and other Balkan areas" is rather an ambitious programme for the immediate future, and your "whole-hearted agreement" might give the impression that such movements are within our power at the present time.

We do not, of course, dissent from the President's general conception of carrying the war into Southern Europe.

Suggested Amendment

You might prefer to alter the second sentence to read -

"I endorse the above general conception by the President".

PARAGRAPH 12

Comment

The only point we have to make is regarding the strength of the forces we can put into Turkey and the time factor. It has been estimated that three divisions and 26 squadrons can be maintained over the Syrian railways, but this estimate can possibly be improved upon. While we are hopeful of organising a considerable force to help the Turks, we think that 10 Divisions is rather an optimistic estimate. The despatch of the VELVET air forces to the east and the build-up of the North Africa air forces to the west will not leave us with much of a margin for the middle, in spite of Rommel's defeat. Turkey's main need is for British fighter squadrons, and we hope to make these available by asking the Americans to send more fighters to the Middle East and North Africa and less to the United Kingdom, where we are well situated as regards fighters at present.

Suggested amendment

The only amendment we suggest to paragraph 12 is that the last passage should read:-

"From all these sources it should be possible, on the assumption of the Russians maintaining themselves in the Caucasus north of the mountain line and holding the Caspian, to build up a considerable land and air force to assist the Turks. A target date for the concentration should be April or May. Let me have proposals."

PARAGRAPH 13.

Comment

We suggest that a Russian-American-British guarantee (see paragraph 13 (a)), should be followed by the despatch of a strong Military Mission to Turkey, where there are many matters which will need discussion and organisation with the Turks before our assistance to them can be made fully effective.

Suggested amendment

We therefore suggest that the following should be added at the end of paragraph 13 (a) -

"This should be followed by the despatch to Turkey of a strong Anglo-American Military Mission".

PARAGRAPH 14

Comments

Since this paper deals almost exclusively with the Middle East, we suggest that the question of our sending aircraft carriers to the Pacific might form the subject of a separate note. In any case, the second sentence of this paragraph would not be suitable for a note which was being sent to the President. Nor do we much like the idea of making our despatch of aircraft carriers to the Pacific conditional on the retention of the 9th Australian and 2nd New Zealand Divisions in the Middle East.

Suggested amendment

We suggest that this paragraph might be omitted.

PARAGRAPH 15

Comments

Here again we suggest that it would be better to deal with the Burmese operations in a separate note. In any event, "ANAKIM" is Rangoon and will not be undertaken until November. The limited operations which General Wavell contemplates early in 1943 is called "CANNIBAL", i.e. Akyab. We do not think that it will be possible to pass military traffic through the Mediterranean until the end of March, 1943. But even when it is possible to do so, an increase rather than a decrease of destroyers will be required to be kept in the Mediterranean.

Suggested amendment

We suggest that this paragraph should be omitted.

PARAGRAPH 16 - No comment.

Offices of the War Cabinet,
S.W.1.

16TH NOVEMBER, 1942.

35

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 183rd Meeting (O)

Held on 16th November 1942

3. FUTURE STRATEGY

34

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(42) 182nd Meeting (O))

THE COMMITTEE had before them a Note* by the Minister of Defence on Future Strategy, which had been discussed at the Staff Conference held the previous day.

32

This Note set out the immediate strategic policy to be followed as a result of the situation in the Mediterranean and fitted into the wider long term policy already proposed by the Chiefs of Staff ø.

A1STRAT/2

THE COMMITTEE discussed the Note paragraph by paragraph. Comments and amendments were proposed for submission to the Minister of Defence.

THE COMMITTEE:-

32

(a) Instructed the Secretary to prepare, for their use at the Meeting of the Defence Committee that evening, a Commentary on the Note* by the Minister of Defence, together with such amendments as had been suggested in the course of the discussion.

36

(b) Instructed the Joint Planning Staff to prepare for their consideration draft replies where applicable, to the Questionnaire set out in C.O.S.(42) 183rd Meeting (O).

59

34

(c) Invited the Principal Administrative Officers' Committee to investigate and report on the possibility of relieving the W.S.Convoy route by utilising the railways in French North Africa from the Western Atlantic coast to Tunisian ports, thus avoiding the routing of large vulnerable personnel ships through the dangerous areas within reach of enemy air forces based on the Italian Islands.

1 See A/Pol/Allies/6

* C.O.S.(42) 892 (O)

ø C.O.S.(42) 345 (O)

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34

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Copy No. 20

C.O.S.(42)182nd Meeting(O)

WAR CABINET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a Staff Conference held at Chequers, on SUNDAY, 15TH NOVEMBER, at 2.45 p.m.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. Winston S. Churchill, M.P., Prime Minister and Minister of Defence. (In the Chair).

Field Marshal The Right Hon. J.C. Smuts, Prime Minister of South Africa.

The Right Hon. Anthony Eden, M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The Right Hon. Lord Leathers, Minister of War Transport.

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound, First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff.

General Sir Alan F. Brooke, Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles F.A. Portal, Chief of the Air Staff.

Brigadier General W.B. Smith, Allied Force Headquarters.

Vice Admiral the Lord Louis Mountbatten, Chief of Combined Operations.

Lieutenant General Sir Hastings L. Ismay, Office of the Minister of Defence.

Major General H.M. Gale, Allied Force Headquarters.

SECRETARIAT:

Brigadier L.C. Hollis.

THE CONFERENCE had before them a Note by the Minister of Defence on future strategy in the North African and Middle East theatres.

The following is a summary of the conclusions which emerged from the discussion:-

1. Political guidance. The Prime Minister, with the concurrence of the Foreign Secretary, laid it down that the study of future action in North Africa and the Mediterranean should proceed on the basis that Spanish hostility need no longer be apprehended and, therefore, that the forces earmarked for Operation "BACKBONE" might be regarded as forming part of the general pool.

2. Questionnaire to the Chiefs of Staff. The Prime Minister invited the Chiefs of Staff to address themselves to the following questions:-

(i) Is the occupation of Sardinia (a) necessary or (b) desirable for the re-opening of the Mediterranean for military traffic, and/or for bringing on the big air battle which is our aim?

(ii) If not, should Sicily have priority over Sardinia as our first objective, observing that, from the political point of view, Sicily is infinitely preferable to Sardinia?

(iii) How soon could an attack on (a) Sardinia and (b) Sicily be launched, observing that the longer the attack is delayed, the greater will be the defences to be overcome at both places?

(iv) Do we wish, at this stage of the campaign, to have a powerful French Army in North Africa, observing that -

(a) equipment for the French can be provided only at the expense of the Anglo-American forces in North Africa; and

(b) it is necessary for us to keep the 'whip-hand' over a nation which has consistently opposed us (e.g. Syria, Madagascar and, recently, in North Africa), while admitting our enemies (e.g. Indo-China)?

(v) Should the capture of Tripoli be assigned to General Alexander or to General Eisenhower, observing that the rearward services which would be required by the latter for this operation could be provided only at the expense of the build-up of fighting troops in North Africa and offensive operations against Sardinia and/or Sicily?

3. Revision of British force allotted to "TORCH". The Prime Minister asked General Smith and General Gale to let him have details of the 180,000 British troops allotted to "TORCH", of which only about 64,000 appeared to be fighting troops. He asked that the figures should be entirely re-cast in the light of the complete change in the problem which faced us in North Africa.

4. Discussion with General Eisenhower. THE CONFERENCE welcomed the proposal that, as soon as agreement had been reached in London on the general lines of our future action in North Africa, General Smith should proceed to Gibraltar, accompanied by Sir Alexander Cadogan and General Gale, to confer with General Eisenhower.

5. Relief of troops at Malta. There was general agreement that the units which had already done a long term of service in Malta should be exchanged with units from Egypt as soon as circumstances and shipping permitted.

Offices of the War Cabinet,
S.W.1.

15TH NOVEMBER, 1942.

14 copies of minute typed & circulated as follows: 32.

1. C.I.C.S.
2.
3. 1st. S.L.
4.
5. C.A.S
6. C.A.S.
7. C.C.O.
8. Gen. Ismay
9. File Copy
10. Col. Price
11. Wing Commander Jefferson.
12. Maj. Carver.
13. —
14. —

MOST SECRET.

COPY NO. 9

C.I.C.S.
FIRST SEA LORD.
C.A.S.
C.C.O.

32

The object of this note is to focus attention on to those points in the note by the Minister of Defence which particularly require the attention of the Chiefs of Staff. Many of the points are dependent upon the answers which the Chiefs of Staff give to the questionnaire in Conclusion 2 of the Minutes of the Conference held at Chequers this afternoon.

2. It will probably be convenient for the Chiefs of Staff to take the note by the Minister of Defence paragraph by paragraph.

108 in A/STRAT/2.

Paragraph 1. The Prime Minister has already recognised the need for the comprehensive review by the Chiefs of Staff. (C.O.S.(42) 345(O)). It is therefore suggested that this paragraph may be allowed to stand.

Paragraphs 2 and 3. No comments.

Paragraph 4. Presumably C.A.S. will comment.

Paragraphs 5 and 6. It was agreed at this afternoon's conference that we should try to demoralise Italy to such an extent that she becomes a drag on the German war effort. The Chiefs of Staff will wish to consider the extent to which it would be right to switch the bombing from Germany to Italy.

Paragraph 7. The Chiefs of Staff will probably agree that the capture of Tripoli is an important British

prize. It is for consideration whether this prize should be grasped from the East or the West. In either event it is impossible for the Chiefs of Staff to work out a plan "with times and numbers". This must be done either by General Eisenhower or by General Alexander.

The Chiefs of Staff will probably think it wrong to "assume that we have free passage through Tunis". We will certainly have to fight the Germans for this.

Paragraph 8. In view of the discussion this afternoon it is doubtful whether Sardinia or Sicily should be the second immediate objective. It is also doubtful whether the reduction of Pantellaria is worthwhile. This paragraph will require re-casting.

Paragraph 9. There are several points -

(a) Doubts were expressed at this afternoon's Conference whether it would be wise to make the French Army in North Africa "powerful" at this stage;

(b) General Smith and General Gale have already been asked to re-cast the figure of 180,000 British troops for "TORCH" to see to what extent the tail can be pruned in the light of the changed situation.

(c) The First Sea Lord will no doubt comment on the suggestion that United States aircraft should be reduced in order to give us 20 more destroyers.

Paragraph 10. Most of this paragraph consists of questions which can be answered here and which are not, perhaps, appropriate to a paper which is being sent to the President.

Paragraph 11. No comment.

Paragraphs 12 and 13. The Chiefs of Staff will probably agree to these proposals in principle, but will doubtless wish to discuss their detailed implications.

Paragraph 14.

(i) The First Sea Lord will no doubt comment on the suggestion that we should reinforce the United States Fleet in the Pacific by 2 fleet aircraft carriers, and that in return we should get a few destroyers.

(ii) C.I.G.S. will no doubt supply the answer to the question regarding the 9th Australian Division.

Paragraph 15. Will require discussion by the Chiefs of Staff.

Paragraph 16. C.I.G.S. agreed in principle to this suggestion at the Conference this afternoon.

15th November, 1942.

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Copy No. 12

C.O.S.(42) 392 (O)

15TH NOVEMBER, 1942.

WAR CABINET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

FUTURE STRATEGY

Note by Secretary

Finalab 42

The attached note+ by the Minister of Defence is circulated for consideration by the Chiefs of Staff at their Meeting tomorrow morning, Monday, 16th November.

(Signed) L. C. HOLLIS.

Offices of the War Cabinet,
S.W.1.
15TH NOVEMBER, 1942.

+ Annex.

Copies of this paper have been sent to

First Sea Lord
Chief of the Imperial General Staff
Chief of Air Staff
Chief of Combined Operations

ANNEX

Trial at 42

NOTE BY MINISTER OF DEFENCE

1. In settling what to do in a vast war situation like this, it may sometimes be found better to take a particular major operation to which one is committed and follow that through vigorously to the end, making other things subordinate to it, rather than to assemble all the data from the whole world scene in a baffling array. After the needs of the major operation have been satisfied so far as possible, other aspects of the war will fall into their proper places. Moreover, it is by the continued stressing of the major operation that our will may be imposed upon the enemy and the initiative regained.

2. The paramount task before us is, first, to conquer the African shores of the Mediterranean and open an effective passage through it for military traffic; and secondly, using the bases on the African shore, to strike at the under-belly of the Axis in effective strength and in the shortest time.

3. There are therefore two phases - consolidation and exploitation. Dealing with consolidation first, we may assume that General Alexander will become master of the whole of Cyrenaica during the present month, and he will be pressing the enemy in the Agheila position or even at Sirte. We may also assume that in the same period the American and British forces will become masters of the whole of French North Africa including Tunis, provided they press forward with their present energy and violence.

4. It will be necessary to set up Air stations at suitable intervals along all the African shore in our power, but particularly and urgently in the Tunis tip. The largest installations for American bombers must be set up here, so that ~~not only any~~ long-range bombers sent by the United States to North Africa ~~but also if desired the main strength of the British Metropolitan bombing force,~~ together with the British-based American bombers, can be used either in a shuttle service from Britain to Africa, or, as may well seem better, on tours of bombing duty in Tunis. The United States form of daylight attack would have its best chance in the better weather of the Mediterranean.

5. The major target at the present time is Italy, including Sicily and Sardinia. The bombing weight of the British night attack should be taken off Germany so far as is necessary for the above purpose. Every endeavour should be made to make Italy feel the weight of the war. All the industrial centres should be attacked in an intense fashion, every effort being made to render them uninhabitable and to terrorize and paralyze the population. I have asked for a scheme of desirable targets in Italy.

6. It will no doubt be necessary also to act against the Catania and Cagliari airfields so as to keep down the attack on Tunis in the period of consolidation.

7. As soon as we are sure of ourselves, and consolidated, in French North Africa including especially Tunis, two simultaneous operations present themselves. The first is the advance to Tripoli. This should have extreme priority the moment we are masters of Tunis. Let me have a plan with times and numbers worked out for this. Would the equivalent of two British divisions be sufficient? Assuming that we have free passage through Tunis, how long would

Success

they take before coming in contact with the enemy at the frontier? We should let Tunis be held by American and French Allied troops and push on at once with General Anderson's leading two divisions. At the same time it is possible that General Alexander may have made progress towards Sirte. The capture of Tripoli will be an important British prize.

8. The second immediate objective is obviously Sardinia, with Corsica to follow. The possession of Sardinia and of the airfields in the south would create an Air triangle, Cagliari - Tunis - Malta, in which we should fight for and secure Air mastery. Moreover from Sardinia continuous intensified short-range attacks on Naples, Rome and the Italian fleet bases would raise the war against Italy to an intense degree. Finally, the ~~reduction of Pantellaria~~ and future operations against Sicily would be facilitated, as well as the control of the Sicilian Narrows with a consequent passage of military traffic to Malta. The fight for Air control in the Central Mediterranean should be undertaken as a great Air battle with extreme priority, the fullest advantage being taken of the Axis shortage of aircraft.

9. The swift success in French North Africa has completely changed the character of the problem which we had been bound to face in that region. We need no longer contemplate a protracted campaign against French and German forces in Algeria and Tunis, nor immediate trouble with the Spaniards in Morocco. On the contrary, all is well, and a powerful French army will be coming into existence on our side, fed by Allied munitions. The scales of the follow-up convoys can be drastically reduced and revised. Take for instance the four British divisions now in North Africa or under orders to go there. Will these four be required? Will the mass of Corps, Army and L. of C. troops be needed, observing that four divisions equals 60,000 men but with the troops the War Office were preparing 180,000 all told, for which presumably transports have been earmarked. All this tail could be sensibly reduced, thus saving escorts for other purposes, including in the following order:-

(a) Sardinia
(b) Restoration of the British Trans-Atlantic convoys.
(c) Resumption of the P.Q. convoys late in December.

To facilitate these vital needs, cannot the United States naval authorities employ less overwhelming escorts for their follow-up Trans-Atlantic convoys, and can the American tail be reduced similarly to the British? The leading United States Trans-Atlantic convoy to Casablanca had 42 destroyers to guard 20 transports. Compare this with the very much more modest precautions which safely carried both British and American convoys seaward round Cape Finisterre through the U boat concentrations. A contribution of say 20 destroyers from United States sources to the vital objectives above mentioned would seem of the greatest importance and would be of enormous value.

10. What are General Eisenhower's wishes about the force to attack Sardinia? There are two British divisions of the First Army, as well as the two others which are standing by. Is there any need to put the first two into North Africa? Can they not

be combat loaded here? Are the losses among our combat loaders crippling? How serious are they? There are great advantages and saving of time in going straight from the United Kingdom to the landings in Sardinia. Where is the plan made by the British Staffs more than a year ago for the attack on Sardinia? We must expect a steady reinforcement of Sardinia by the enemy, and speed will make our task definitely lighter.

Decisions on all the above are needed within the next week.

11. I have received a telegram from the President containing the following paragraph:-

> "It is hoped that you with your Chiefs of Staff in London and I with the Combined Staff here may make a survey of the possibilities including forward movement directed against Sardinia, Sicily, Italy, Greece and other Balkan areas and including the possibility of obtaining Turkish support for an attack through the Black Sea against Germany's flank."

I am in the most wholehearted agreement with this. The first part of the President's wishes are being studied by the Combined Staffs in Washington, and are the subject of the foregoing paragraphs for our discussions.

12. The second part relating to Turkey is also of vital importance, though it is a slower process. A supreme and prolonged effort must be made to bring Turkey into the war in the Spring. We must expect that our naval forces and shipping, landing craft, etc. will be fully engaged in the Central Mediterranean, and that only minor amphibious facilities will be available in the Levant. Access can however be had to Turkey by the railways through Syria as well as by coastal shipping, and by a gradual build-up of Air protection not only Adalia but the Dardanelles itself might become open to supplies for Turkey. Troops can move by rail and road from Syria.

I wish to record my opinion that Turkey may be won if the proper measures are taken. Turkey is an Ally. She will wish to have a seat among the victors at the Peace Conference. She has a great desire to be well-armed. Her Army is in good order except for the specialized modern weapons, in which the Bulgarians have been given so great an advantage by the Germans. The Turkish Army has been mobilised for nearly three years, and is warlike. Hitherto Turkey has been restrained by fear from fulfilling her obligations, and we have taken an indulgent view of her policy on account of our own inability to help. The situation has now changed. By the destruction of Rommel's Army, large forces may presently become available in Egypt and Cyrenaica. By a strengthened Russian resistance and a possible counterstroke in the Caucasus, which we should urge upon the Russians with all emphasis, great easement will be secured in Persia and the Tenth Army may be drawn upon. There is also the Ninth Army in Syria. From all these sources it should be possible, on the assumption of the Russians maintaining themselves

in the Caucasus north of the mountain line and holding the Caspian, to build up at least 10 divisions (of which 3 should be armoured) to take their stations whence they could come to the aid of Turkey by a non-combat loaded sea journey or by rail and road. April or May should be suitable dates to aim at.

13. The following is the order of procedure, political and military:-

(a) Turkey should be offered a Russian-American-British guarantee of territorial integrity and status quo. The Russians have already agreed with us upon this. The addition of the United States would probably be decisive.

(b) All through the winter from now on, Turkey must be equipped from Egypt and from the United States with tanks, A/T. and A.A. guns, and active construction of airfields must be undertaken. We have been working upon airfield construction in Turkey for two years. What progress has been made so far? Now that Rommel has been beaten, there is evidently a great surplus of material in Egypt. We had over 2,500 tanks at the disposal of the Middle East Army. Much enemy material has been captured, both German and Italian. This is also true of A/T. and A.A. guns. Experts must be provided to assist the Turks in learning to use this material. A ceaseless flow of weapons and equipment must go into Turkey. We have already promised a consignment, but the moment Turkey agrees secretly with the plan above, far greater quantities must be sent. What is the capacity of the railways from Syria to the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles? It would seem a great mistake to attack Rhodes and other islands in enemy hands in the Eastern Mediterranean until we have got Turkey on our side. Any attacks can then be supported by heavy shore-based Air power. We have to creep round this coast both by land and sea, building up our Air as we go.

(c) In conjunction with the above, we should urge the Russians to develop their strength on their southern flank, to try to clear the Caucasus, to regain Novorossisk and, above all, to resume at the earliest date their intentions explained to me by Premier Stalin, of striking south-west from the region north of Stalingrad towards Rostov on the Don. An ultimate result of these operations, if successful, would be the opening of the Dardanelles under heavy Air protection to the passage of supplies to Russian Black Sea ports, and to any naval assistance the Russians might require in the Black Sea.

(d) Lastly, all being well we should assemble in Syria the British and Imperial forces mentioned in preceding paragraphs.

14. We should endeavour to meet the urgent needs of the United States in the Pacific by placing two of our best aircraft carriers at their disposal. We should hope that they would take a friendly view about the transfer of destroyers, not as a bargain, but as a reciprocal good office. The movement of these aircraft carriers to the Pacific should be made, as far as possible, conditional on the 9th Australian and 2nd New Zealand Divisions remaining where they are, unless Australia is attacked in force.

The President has already offered Mr. Curtin an additional division. I have refrained from discussing the return of the 9th Division with Mr. Curtin till I knew his views on the President's telegram. How does this matter stand now?

15. Supposing events take the course above out-lined, what strength can be used to build up the Eastern Fleet by January, in order to support General Wavell's impending offensive called "ANAKIM"? Seven battleships, (three modernised) are already available. If the Mediterranean could be reopened, relief would be had on the traffic round the Cape. Moreover the W.S. convoys must be revised in view of the new situation. Is there any possibility of passing military traffic through the Mediterranean say by the end of January 1943? From these sources a flotilla might be found for the Eastern Fleet. What cruisers are available? What auxiliary carriers? The target date should be February 1. Let a scheme be prepared for consideration.

16. The relief and re-supplying of Malta should follow naturally from the operations now in progress or in prospect in the Central Mediterranean, and the immediate needs of the island are being dealt with on an effective scale. It would be well, when circumstances and shipping permit, to exchange the Units who have long been in the fortress for some of those who have been in the Desert, and vice versa.

NOVEMBER 14, 1942.

Churchill

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 149th Meeting (O)

Held on 12th November, 1942

4. MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY

(Previous reference: C.O.S.(42) 176th Mtg.(O)) -24

SIR ALAN BROOKE raised two further questions of broad strategy in the Mediterranean.

(a) The first was what forces would be required for the defence of the North African littoral from Port Said to Casablanca. These forces would have a dual role. First, to ensure the security of the North African territories and to provide the necessary cover for the passage of shipping through the Mediterranean. Secondly, to secure North Africa as a springboard for further offensive action against outlying Axis territories. The examination which he had in mind would have to take into account the alternatives of active co-operation or neutrality on the part of the French forces in North Africa and it should lead to definite proposals. In this connection it was most important that the problem of the respective spheres of responsibility of ourselves and the U.S.A. in North Africa should be settled as early as possible and the Joint Planning Staff should press on with the paper on which they were already engaged.

(b) The second point was how best we could take advantage of a crack in the Italian structure. An Italian appeal for an armistice, when it came, might be accompanied by a request to us for protection against Germany. This would be a very large commitment were we to accept it. Whatever form the Italian collapse might take, we ought to be ready at once to take advantage of it.

SIR CHARLES PORTAL suggested that the situation which the Chief of the Imperial General Staff had outlined would present a fleeting opportunity for us to step in and occupy the Italian islands.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Instructed the Joint Planning Staff:-

(i) To estimate the forces required for the defence of North Africa under the conditions described in (a) above.

(ii) To press on with the examination of the respective spheres of Allied influence in the Mediterranean area.

(iii) To take account of the views expressed in (b) above in their study of how best to take advantage of an Italian collapse.

Item 30

Unparaphrased Version of a Secret
Cypher Telegram not One Time Table.

OZ. 1876
TOO. 1730Z/12
TOD. 1740Z/12

SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

IMMEDIATE

From:- Air Ministry

To:- Britman Washington

OZ. 1876 12th Nov. 1942.

Following from Chiefs of Staff No.C.O.S(W)345.

Reference J.S.M.473. - 28

If suggestion for study for further operations in Mediterranean comes from U.S. side you can certainly comply and use C.O.S(42)354(O). - 21

2. We are making close study of next moves in Mediterranean, These must be governed by outcome of situation which is, for the moment, confused and obscure. See Prime Minister's telegram to Field Marshal Dill No. OZ.1873.

A/S Mac 12

T.O.O. 1730Z/12

(Circulation)

Brig. Jacob
Foreign Secretary
First Sea Lord
C.6 Tels, War Office
C.A.S.

29

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 315th Meeting

Held on 12th November 1942

2. REPORT OF MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY -28

THE COMMITTEE considered a telegram Ø J.S.M. 473 from the Joint Staff Mission asking whether the British Planners in Washington could use the Chiefs of Staff Report (C.O.S.(42) 354 (O)) as background, should the Combined Staff Planners be asked to study further operations in the Mediterranean. 21

In discussion it was agreed that it would be better for the Chiefs of Staff Report to remain in abeyance pending further consideration of our future strategy. Should, however, the Americans press for a study of further operations in the Mediterranean, there would be no objection to our Planners using the paper.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Instructed the Secretary to draft a telegram in the above sense to the Joint Staff Mission, and to arrange for its despatch+. C.O.S.(W) 345 - 30

28

Unparaphrased Version of a Secret Cypher Telegram not One Time Table.

IZ. 2152
TOO. 1325Z/11
TOR. 1915Z/11

SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM.

IMMEDIATE.

From:- J.S.M. Washington.

To:- Chiefs of Staff, London.

J.S.M. 473 11th November, 1942

(1) If moment seems opportune to us here presume you would have no objection to our suggesting that Combined Staff Planners should study further operations in Mediterranean, using your C.O.S.(42)354(O) as background for our Planners. We have not yet passed copy of thispaper to U.S. Chiefs of Staff, (2) although it was agreed to do so in para. 37(a) of the paper, in view of hold-up on C.O.S.(42)345(O).

2. Suggestion for study by Combined Staff Planners may, of course, come from U.S. side, but this is unlikely.

T.O.O. 1325Z/11

Circulation.

Brigadier Jacob.
Foreign Secretary.
First Sea Lord.
C.6. Telegrams, War Office.
C.A.S.
C.C.O.

24 S.I.C. P.A.

To Defence Registry for despatch 1305 10/11 A.L.B.

TELEGRAM.

From: Air Ministry.

To: Britman, Washington.

Important

DOTEL 511.

Private for Dykes.

Your LETOD 405. - 26

Feel strongly that Mediterranean paper - 21 should not repeat not be put across just now.

Unparaphrased Version of a Secret
Cypher Telegram not One Time Table

IZ 2123
TOO 2139Z/9
TOR 0015Z/10

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

IMPORTANT

From :- Britman, Washington,

To :- Air Ministry, London.

LETOD 405 9th Nov. 1942.

Private for Hollis.

In view of Prime Minister's 1127Z/9 to Lyttelton, what do we do about Mediterranean strategy paper ? We were just getting set to pass this across.

2. Gather from a signal from Smith that a very wide field was covered in after dinner discussions. Shall be interested to see whether you will succeed in getting Uncle Ernie to make another trip.

T.O.O. 2139Z/9

CIRCULATION.

Brigadier Jacob.

Suggest answer is

Don't.

repeat DON'T

25

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 311th Meeting

Held on 9th November 1942

1. MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY.

THE COMMITTEE had a discussion[+] on our future strategy in the Mediterranean in the light of current operations in that area.

[+] recorded separately 24

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C.O.S.(42) 176th Meeting (O)

WAR CABINET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

25

Part of 311th mtg. min. 1

Part of C.O.S.(42) 311th Meeting held on MONDAY, 9TH NOVEMBER, 1942, at 10.30 a.m.

MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY - EXPLOITATION OF "TORCH"

THE COMMITTEE had a short discussion of the possible effect on Italy of future operations in the Mediterranean theatre.

SIR ALAN BROOKE suggested that the Joint Planning Staff should be asked to appreciate the situation which would arise if Italy tried to drop out of the war. Could Germany afford to let Italy make a separate peace; alternatively, what would be the effect on German strategy if she were compelled to allocate some twenty German divisions in order to hold down Italy and to garrison the southern part of the country and the Italian islands against the threat of Allied invasion, bearing in mind that Germany would also have to take over the commitment of holding down Yugo-Slavia?

During discussion it was pointed out that in the above circumstances the Germans would probably obtain effective control of the Italian fleet. This would to some considerable extent offset the German Army liability for holding down and defending Italy.

SIR ALAN BROOKE also stressed the importance of completing the build-up for "TORCH" as quickly as possible in order that advantage might be taken of favourable developments in the situation. He suggested that the Naval Staff should consider accelerating the convoy programme.

SIR HENRY MOORE said that this was a question for the Naval Staff of Allied Force Headquarters. He doubted whether the escort situation would permit much acceleration of the programme but he would take up the point with Admiral Ramsay.

THE COMMITTEE:-

(a) Instructed the Joint Planning and Joint Intelligence Staffs -

(i) To examine and make recommendations on the action which might now be taken on the assumption that success in "TORCH" was quick and complete;

(ii) To re-examine our policy towards Italy in the light of success in "LIGHTFOOT" and "TORCH" and of accepted strategy towards Italy.

(b) Took note that the Vice Chief of Naval Staff would take up with the Naval Staff, Allied Force Headquarters, the question of accelerating the sailing of "TORCH" convoys, and would report. - E/NA/3 (D)

(c) Instructed the Joint Planning Staff to press on with their examination of the respective spheres of Allied influence in the Mediterranean.

Great George Street, S.W.1.

9th November, 1942.

23

Unparaphrased Version of a Secret Cypher Telegram not One Time Table.

IZ. 2074
TOO. 2357Z/5
TOR. 0415Z/6

SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM.

From:- J.S.M. Washington.

To:- War Cabinet Offices London.

LETOD 394 5.11.42

Just got COS (42) 354 (O). 21 Reference para. 37 (a). Are we to take this up with U.S. COS. Please inform us officially.

TOO. 2357Z/5

(Circulation)

Brig. Jacob.

SECRET

copy also on folder E of E(N.af.)3

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 164th Meeting (O)

Held on 29th October 1942

2. "TORCH": EXPLOITATION.

15

(Previous reference: C.O.S.(42)155th Mtg.(O), Min.7(iv)).

LT.-GENERAL EISENHOWER said that he fully realised that the BACKBONE force had been set up solely to deal with a threat from Spanish Morocco. At the same time, all other available forces in TORCH would be fully committed, and, should an opportunity arise for further exploitation such as, for example, the capture of Sardinia, he considered that BACKBONE force should be held in reserve to meet such an eventuality.

Any decision to advance beyond his present objective would be a matter for decision by the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

SIR ALAN BROOKE said that this force could not be regarded as a reserve for the exploitation of TORCH, since the holding of shipping even up to the date originally mentioned by General Eisenhower would cause serious difficulties.

LT.-GENERAL EISENHOWER, agreeing with the above, said that the Combined Chiefs of Staff might wish to take advantage of the period before the enemy had had time to build up his defences. In that case a decision would have to be taken whether the forces to be employed should not come from BACKBONE force.

Meanwhile his staff were taking with them all the intelligence available in order that they should continue the study of plans for the capture of Sardinia; part of his Planning Staff was being left behind in order to continue work in this connection in London with the British Planning Staffs.

LORD LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN enquired whether General Eisenhower had considered the use of Corsica in operations against Sardinia, should we be invited to occupy the former at a time when operations were being mounted for the capture of Sardinia.

LT.-GENERAL EISENHOWER said that he had not so far studied this point, but it appeared likely that Corsica would not be much value until we had captured Sardinia. He considered, however, that the elimination of Rommel and the freeing of the whole of North Africa should take precedence over such operations as the capture of Sardinia. These could be undertaken later.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Agreed that the BACKBONE force could not be regarded as a reserve for further exploitation.

The circulation of this paper has been strictly limited. It is issued for the personal use of Brig Hollis (Miss Bright).

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

Printed for the War Cabinet. October 1942.

MOST SECRET.

Copy No. 52

C.O.S. (42) 354 (O).

October 20, 1942.

TO BE KEPT UNDER LOCK AND KEY

It is requested that special care may be taken to ensure the secrecy of this document

WAR CABINET.

Chiefs of Staff Committee.

MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY.

REPORT.

Our strategic object in 1943 is to wear down Germany so as to open the way for an eventual re-entry to the Continent. To this end we intend to make a major effort in the Mediterranean in order to turn that area into an immense liability for Germany and thereby contribute relief to the Russian Front.

2. In this paper we examine the offensive possibilities in the Mediterranean.

ASSUMPTIONS.

3.—(*a*) "Torch" has been successful and we are in occupation of the whole of French North Africa.

(*b*) The Germans have not penetrated into Southern Caucasia.

(*c*) Offensive operations have been carried out by the Eighth Army against Axis forces in North Africa, but they are still in the field.

(*d*) Turkey is still neutral.

OUR OBJECT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

4. "Torch" and "Lightfoot" constitute the first steps in carrying out the policy in paragraph 1 above. Their aims are to give us control of the whole of North Africa, and ultimately to enable us to re-open the Mediterranean route to the Middle East. This latter aim must necessarily take a considerable time as it will depend on the establishment of extensive air forces and defence equipment in North Africa and the build up of large numbers of light naval craft.

5. We have, therefore, two broad objects in the Mediterranean:—

(*a*) To aggravate the Axis liability in that theatre (see paragraphs 14–21 below) and thereby contribute to the relief of Russia.

(*b*) To re-open the sea route. (See paragraphs 22–28).

ENEMY COURSES OF ACTION.

6. Apart from any action which the Axis may take in support of their forces in North Africa which will be threatened from two sides after a successful "Torch," the broad courses of action open to the enemy in the defence of his position in the Mediterranean are:—

(a) To rely on direct defence of his Mediterranean flank.

7. Our successful occupation of French North Africa and such success as we gain from "Lightfoot" must force the enemy to take substantial defensive measures in direct defence of his Mediterranean flank. This is likely to include the reinforcement of Sicily, Sardinia and Crete, strengthening of A.A. and fighter defences in Italy and possibly the occupation of the south coast of France.

There are at present some three or four Italian divisions in both Sardinia and Sicily, and, if given sufficient time, we estimate the Axis would increase their garrisons to six and eight divisions and their air forces to 250 and 650 aircraft respectively.

(b) To strike through Turkey and/or into Persia at our Middle East oil and communications, and so interfere with our effort from the east.

8. An attack through Turkey is considered to be out of the question unless Russia has been defeated; this is now most unlikely before midsummer 1943 at the earliest, in which case an attack could not develop before September.

9. The Germans have for some time been engaged in an attempt to break through into Southern Caucasia, with Iran and the Abadan oil-fields as their ultimate objective. This offensive is considerably behind programme, and it is estimated that a heavy attack could not be developed against Northern Persia area until midsummer of 1943.

(c) To strike through Spain to gain the northern shore of the Straits of Gibraltar and restrict our attack from the west.

10. Germany would probably adopt this course if she could provide the necessary forces to invade Spain, if she were prepared to accept the serious economic and administrative liability, and if she could subsequently provide and establish the necessary air forces to attack our communications through the Straits of Gibraltar. Successful action against these communications would undoubtedly provide the best, if not the only, means of defeating our Mediterranean offensive in the long run.

Such an attack might possibly be attempted before the defeat of Russia, but probably only if Spain acquiesces.

11. Whether or not Spain acquiesces will in turn depend largely on the vigour and success of our offensive action generally, and particularly in the Mediterranean. Proportionately with such success Spanish resistance will harden.

Conclusion on Enemy courses of action.

12. A major effort against our Middle East position is extremely improbable before midsummer 1943.

Attack through Spain is also unlikely unless Russia has been defeated; but it is still possible. Its likelihood will decrease as our success increases.

OUR SECURITY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

13. Despite the conclusion above that the Axis will probably have to be content with direct defence in the Mediterranean, Allied strategy must be conditioned by the latent threats to the flanks of this theatre. We shall not be able to judge the reality and urgency of these threats at least until after "Torch." Until therefore it is clear beyond doubt that the Axis will in fact rely on direct defence of the Mediterranean, we must retain the ability:—

(*a*) In the west, to seize Spanish Morocco;
(*b*) In the east, to reinforce the northern front of our Middle East position.

OBJECTIVES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

14. To aggravate the Axis liability in the Mediterranean we have the following choice of objectives:—

(*a*) South France;
(*b*) Balkans;
(*c*) Italy.

Our general strategy for the war against Germany does not envisage large-scale land operations against the Axis until German morale and powers of resistance have cracked. Our main effort in the Mediterranean must therefore be considered against this background.

South France.

15. It would be politically unwise to enter South France as long as it remains unoccupied by the Germans; and it would be tactically impossible to seize and maintain a bridgehead there from which the Germans could not easily evict us. Until a late stage in the war, therefore, we shall be limited in South France to raids and attacks on shipping, and irregular operations by patriots.

The Balkans.

16. Land operations in the Balkans are unlikely to be profitable owing to maintenance difficulties. But there is great scope for guerrilla activities and the intensification of sabotage; both might affect Axis oil supplies from Roumania and Axis land and sea communications with their new sources of supply in Russia.

17. If Turkey could eventually be persuaded to join the Allies, we could develop effective attacks on vital Axis oil-fields and sea communications, while the capture of Crete and the Dodecanese would be immensely simplified. It should therefore be our object to strengthen Turkey in any way that we can, and convince her that the Germans are going to be beaten.

Italy.

18. There is clearly a good chance of turning Italy into a great liability to Germany.

19. Threats to Italy are likely to result in the recall home of Italian forces from Russia and the Balkans, and U-boats from the Atlantic. Substantial German land and air forces may also have to be brought in to support the Italians. If the Germans were unable to divert forces to Italy, there might be a revulsion of feeling against the Fascists and the Germans which might result in the virtual collapse of Italy.

20. Air, naval and limited land operations directed against Italian centres of industry and communications, together with adequate supplies for sabotage, will probably prove sufficient to turn Italy into a serious liability to Germany.

Conclusion on Objectives in the Mediterranean.

21. Our main effort in the Mediterranean should therefore be directed against Italy. Threats against the South of France and the Balkans will also extend the enemy.

KEY POINTS.

22. The key points in the Mediterranean are—

(*a*) Libya.
(*b*) Sardinia.
(*c*) Sicily.
(*d*) Crete and the Dodecanese.

In directing our main effort in the Mediterranean towards Italy, the capture of one or more of these key points must be first considered. We examine below the respective contribution which the capture of each would make towards turning the Mediterranean into the maximum Axis liability as well as towards reopening the through sea route.

Libya.

23. The elimination of Axis forces in North Africa would—

(i) remove the main threat to the Middle East and free the bulk of the Eighth Army and some air forces for operations elsewhere;
(ii) have an excellent effect on morale all over the world;
(iii) re-open the Eastern Mediterranean to a limited traffic.

Sardinia.

24. The capture of Sardinia would—

(i) open up the Western Mediterranean for a full flow of traffic as far as Tunisia;
(ii) clear the way for air, naval and land attacks over a wide arc from the South of France along the mainland of Italy to Sicily;
(iii) increase our ability to deny the Balearics to the Germans;
(iv) open the way for the occupation of Corsica. (We should not be able to go to Corsica, even at French invitation, until our communications had been secured by the capture of Sardinia);
(v) provide an air reinforcement route 155 miles shorter than that to Algiers.

Sicily.

25. The capture of Sicily would—

(i) be a far bigger prize than Sardinia, both politically and militarily;
(ii) open up the Malta Channel for a full flow of traffic;
(iii) permanently divide the Italian Fleet, or bottle it up in one half of the Mediterranean.
(iv) clear the way for an attack on Southern Italy and Greece.

Crete and the Dodecanese.

26. The capture of Crete and the Dodecanese would :—

(i) allow us to attain the full flow of traffic in the Eastern Mediterranean.
(ii) permit a high degree of control over the important Axis communications in the Mediterranean and Black Sea;
(iii) stiffen Turkey, and possibly—
(iv) open the way for action in the Balkans.

Effect on Opening the Mediterranean Sea Route.

27. We shall have taken a large step towards re-opening the Mediterranean once the whole of North African coast is in our hands. However, as long as the enemy holds the air and naval bases in Sardina, Sicily, Crete and the Dodecanese, we could not hope to pass regular convoys through the Mediterranean without excessive loss until we had established extensive air forces and defence equipment and amassed large numbers of light naval craft for use along the North African coast. Not only will it be many months before this programme could be completed, but the locking up of so many resources in this purely defensive role must inevitably detract greatly from the development of our offensive.

Conclusion on Key Points.

28. In the meantime the capture of Libya and of any of the above islands would be a step forward towards opening the through sea route to a full flow of traffic; the capture of Sardinia and Sicily, although undoubtedly formidable and costly undertakings, may well prove the quickest means to this end. When considered in conjunction with their influence on our ultimate objective—Italy, their capture is clearly of paramount importance.

COURSES OF ACTION.

29. These key points may be attacked either from the East or from the West, or from both simultaneously.

Action from the East.

30. Although unlikely to arise before the middle of 1943, the greatest potential danger to our offensive from the East would be an Axis threat through Turkey and/or the Caucasus, which would entail the provision of large reinforcements which could not all be provided from the Western Desert. It follows that the fate of the Axis forces in North Africa must be sealed as quickly as possible; the Eighth Army will then be free to provide forces for further action in other areas.

To eliminate these Axis forces a major overland attack must be made from the East, combined with such effort as can be developed against him from the West, both overland and against his sea communications.

Action from the West.

31. The greatest impediment to the development of our offensive from the West would be a German occupation of Southern Spain. Apart from direct military support to Spain, the measures best calculated to deter the Axis from going into Spain would appear to be :—

(*a*) rapid success in French North Africa (and Libya) thereby promoting Spanish belief in the possibility of Allied victory;
(*b*) the extension of economic benefits to Spain;
(*c*) the threat of Allied action across the Channel, *i.e.*, against the lines of communication of any German forces in the Iberian Peninsula; and
(*d*) continued Allied pressure on Axis interests in the Mediterranean.

32. As regards (*d*) above, further Allied pressure from the West might be directed against Axis forces in North Africa, against Sicily or Sardinia, or in both directions.

We must clearly be prepared to act against Axis forces in North Africa with all usable resources, but this will not necessarily preclude early operations against Sardinia or Sicily. If events turn out favourably we may get an opportunity—a fleeting one—to capture one or other of these islands at little cost. We should take advantage of that opportunity.

33. Although Sicily is undoubtedly the greater political and military prize, the capture of Sardinia would also be a wide threat to Axis interests. Since the opportunity to capture either may be only fleeting, and our resources after the capture of French North Africa will be small, the decision will have to be based on which Island is the easier to take and to hold.

On these grounds Sardinia appears the better choice, because—

(*a*) Preliminary examination has shown that smaller forces are needed to take and hold it.
(*b*) Enemy communications are much better to Sicily than to Sardinia.
(*c*) Our sea communications from the Western Mediterranean to Sardinia should be good, while those leading to Sicily would be difficult as long as Sardinia is in Axis hands.

34. Until the progress of "Lightfoot" and "Torch" and enemy reactions to these two operations become apparent, the balance between these requirements cannot be weighed. But clearly we should be fully prepared both to act against the rear of Axis forces in North Africa with all available forces and to seize what may be a fleeting opportunity of capturing Sardinia before that island has been reinforced.

Action subsequent to Capture of Sardinia and Libya.

35. At this stage Allied action subsequent to the elimination of Axis forces from Africa and the capture of Sardinia can only be speculative. Broadly the possibilities are :—

In the West (assuming the Germans have not gone into Spain)—

(*a*) to capture Sicily;
(*b*) to extend the offensive by naval and air action, and limited land operations, to the mainland of Italy;
(*c*) to raid the coast of Southern France, possibly in conjunction with a cross-Channel operation against such an objective as a U-boat base.

In the East (assuming that there are no signs of a German break-through into Persia) :—

(*a*) to assist if necessary in the capture of Sicily;
(*b*) to co-operate offensively on the Southern Russian front;
(*c*) to support Turkey with a view to persuading her to join the Allies, and possibly,—
(*d*) to capture Crete and the Dodecanese.

CONCLUSIONS.

36. Our conclusions are as follows:—

(a) Our main effort in the Mediterranean should be directed against Italy.

(b) In order to ensure that Axis forces in North Africa are out of the hunt before the Axis can strike through Turkey or the Caucasus, to deter the Axis from going through Spain, to increase the threat to Italy and therefore open the way for an attack on Sicily, and to take a further step towards the re-opening of the Mediterranean, we should first aim at—

(i) The elimination of Axis forces in North Africa from the east, together with such assistance as can be rendered from the west.

(ii) The capture of Sardinia from the west at the earliest opportunity.

37. We have approved the following action:—

(a) That this appreciation should be agreed with the American Chiefs of Staff.

(b) That this appreciation should be discussed with General Eisenhower.

(c) That copies of this appreciation should also be sent to the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East and Persia/Iraq.

(Signed) A. F. BROOKE.
DUDLEY POUND.
C. PORTAL.

Great George Street, S.W. 1,
October 28, 1942.

[The Chiefs of Staff have not seen this appreciation in its final form.]

20

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 163rd Meeting (O)

Held on 28th October 1942.

12. MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY

J.P.(42) 886 and C.O.S.(42) 351 (O)

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(42) 300th Meeting, Minute 6)

THE COMMITTEE had before them:-

(i) A Report by the Joint Planning Staff examining the possibility of offensive operations in the Mediterranean following "TORCH".

(ii) A Note by the Secretary covering minutes exchanged between the Prime Minister and the Chiefs of Staff on the exploitation of "TORCH".

(iii) A telegram* from General Eisenhower to the Combined Chiefs of Staff on the constitution of the Northern Task Force.

In discussion with members of the Joint Planning Staff, the following views were expressed.

Caucasia

(i) SIR ALAN BROOKE said that he did not agree with the arguments in paragraphs 9 and 13 of the Report; the threat to Northern Persia did not depend on a Russian defeat. If Russian resistance in this area collapsed the threat would develop early next year; if Russian resistance continued it would delay the German penetration through the Caucasus but would be unlikely to prevent it. It should therefore be our strategy to reinforce the northern front to our Middle East position, as was in fact stated in paragraph 14 (b) of the Report.

Turkey

(ii) SIR ALAN BROOKE said that in spite of the views held by the Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee on the improbability of Turkey entering the war until the defeat of Germany appeared certain to them, it should be our policy to do all we could to hasten the Turkish entry into the war. Paragraph 18 of the Report should be more emphatic on this point.

CAPTAIN BUZZARD said that he did not subscribe to the view that operations for the recapture of Crete and the Dodecanese were impracticable without the use of air bases in Turkey. Provided that the Italian air force could be pinned down in the central Mediterranean, and that we were prepared to use auxiliary aircraft carriers in the Eastern Mediterranean, operations for the capture of Crete and the Dodecanese should have reasonable prospects of success.

SIR DUDLEY POUND said that he was not prepared to agree to the use of auxiliary aircraft carriers for these operations in the circumstances envisaged.

Sardinia and Sicily

(iii) CAPTAIN BUZZARD emphasised the importance of being ready to take advantage of a fleeting opportunity, which might occur after "TORCH" had been successfully carried out, to capture and occupy Sardinia.

The Joint Planning Staff had prepared an outline plan for this operation on the assumption that it might be possible to carry it out somewhere between "TORCH" D + 60 and D + 100 provided that "TORCH" and "LIGHTFOOT" resulted in an appreciable decrease in the Axis air forces in Sardinia.

It had been estimated that soon after D + 100 the Germans might begin to put appreciable armoured forces into Sardinia but the rate of Axis build-up in this island would be governed by the limited port facilities and the prior importance, in their eyes, of reinforcing Southern Italy and Sicily.

The forces necessary for the capture of Sardinia were estimated to be of the order of four infantry divisions and one armoured division - more than twice the strength of the "BACKBONE" force. It was believed, however, that General Eisenhower was considering the possibility of using the "BACKBONE" force as the nucleus of an expedition to capture Sardinia should "TORCH" prove 100 per cent successful and Spain remain neutral.

An outline plan for the capture of Sicily had not yet been completed but it was clear that Sicily would be a much harder nut to crack and would require far bigger forces; it was of course a far greater prize than Sardinia.

SIR ALAN BROOKE said that it had not been intended to earmark the Northern Task Force for operations against Sardinia in the event of operation "BACKBONE" proving unnecessary. It would be as much, if not more, than we could do to find the shipping for "BACKBONE" for the limited period during which it might be required. It appeared from the discussion the previous day that the provision of shipping facilities for "BRIMSTONE" (Sardinia) would be quite outside our resources. It had always been intended that the forces for the occupation of Sardinia, if the opportunity offered, should be found from the "TORCH" follow-up.

LIEUT.-COLONEL RAY said that one of the difficulties of doing Sardinia with the "TORCH" forces was that the North African ports were inadequate to cater for the maintenance of "TORCH" forces and the preparation of operation "BRIMSTONE" simultaneously.

After some further discussion it was agreed to discuss this question with General Eisenhower at the meeting the following day.

A/POL/ALLIES/2

Spheres of Influence in the Mediterranean

(iv) SIR ALAN BROOKE said that it was for consideration whether the time had not come to take up with the Americans the definition of a sphere of strategic responsibility within the Mediterranean. It had been assumed that French North Africa would be an American sphere; but if "TORCH" became virtually an entry into North Africa by invitation, it was certain that the French would expect to be in supreme command.

As far as the Western Mediterranean was concerned our chief interest was the opening of the Mediterranean sea route and the denial of Tunisia to the Axis.

In discussion it was agreed that it would be wiser to leave this question until after "TORCH" had been launched but it was agreed that the problem would require considerable preliminary study.

Corsica

(v) LORD LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN suggested that a paragraph should be inserted in the Report dealing with the situation which would arise if we received an invitation from the French to occupy Corsica.

In discussion it was agreed that the occupation and maintenance of Corsica would not be practicable until we had occupied Sardinia. Until this had been done it would probably be necessary to decline a French invitation to send forces to Corsica.

It was agreed that a paragraph to this effect should be inserted in the Paper.

THE COMMITTEE then discussed the Conclusions set out in paragraphs 37 and 38 of the Joint Planning Staff Report and agreed that paragraphs 38(a) and 38(b) should be deleted. It was noted that a copy of the Report had already been handed to General Eisenhower's staff.

21

THE COMMITTEE:-

Subs. circulated as C.O.S.(42) 354 (O)

(a) Instructed the Secretary to amend the Report* in the light of the discussion and to circulate it over their signatures.

(b) Agreed that copies of the final Report should be sent to the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East, and Persia/Iraq, and invited the War Office to despatch them.

(c) Agreed to discuss with General Eisenhower at the meeting the following day the policy for exploiting "TORCH" with particular reference to operations against Sardinia.

(d) Instructed the Joint Planning Staff to examine and make recommendations for a definition of the respective spheres of Allied influence in the Mediterranean area.

* Subsequently circulated as C.O.S.(42) 354 (O)

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C.O.S.(42)351 (O).

27TH OCTOBER, 1942.

WAR CABINET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

OPERATION TORCH - EXPLOITATION

Note by Secretary.

In view of their Meeting with General Eisenhower on Thursday morning 29th October, the Chiefs of Staff may wish at their meeting tomorrow 28th October to give further consideration to the Mediterranean Strategy Paper† on which there was some preliminary discussion with the Director of Plans and Middle East Joint Planning Staff last week.*

2. In this connection it will be remembered that the Prime Minister on 28th September addressed a Minuteø to the Chiefs of Staff on the exploitation of Torch within the Mediterranean. This was considered on 30th September when the attached interim reply≠ was sent.

3. With reference to paragraph 2(a) of this reply, an outline plan for "Brimstone" has now been completed by the Joint Planning Staff and is available, should the Chiefs of Staff wish to consider it.ϒ

(Signed) L.C. HOLLIS.

Great George Street, S.W.1.

27TH OCTOBER, 1942.

†J.P.(42)886
*C.O.S.(42)158th Meeting(O).
øAnnex I.
≠Annex II.
ϒJ.P.(42) 885.

ANNEX I.

"GENERAL ISMAY FOR C.O.S. COMMITTEE. (D.165/2)

Let me see what studies have been made so far for the exploitation of TORCH, should it prove entirely successful. Sardinia, Sicily and Italy itself have no doubt been considered. If things go well, we should not waste a day but carry the war northwards with audacity. I am hoping that Air plans have already been made to bring Southern Italy under close bombing attack as soon as we are established in Tunis. What arrangements have been made with Lord Gort about the Malta force? Assuming that Tunis comes over quietly and swiftly, what forces do we send forward to clear up Tripoli?

(Intld.) W.S.C.

28.9.42".

ANNEX II.

MOST SECRET

PRIME MINISTER

"TORCH"

The Chiefs of Staff considered your Minute at Flag 'A'* at their Meeting this morning. They feel that the first and principal objective of "TORCH" must be to eliminate Rommel and open up the Mediterranean in conjunction with "LIGHTFOOT".

2. At the same time they entirely agree that plans must be prepared for the exploitation of "TORCH" northwards, and the following studies have already been put in hand -

(a) Plans for the capture of Sardinia (Operation "BRIMSTONE") and Sicily (Operation "HUSKY");

(b) Plans to capture Pantelleria (the Chief of Combined Operations is charged with this study);

(c) The possibility of other offensive operations in the Mediterranean.

As soon as the above studies have been completed, the Chiefs of Staff intend to prepare a comprehensive appreciation of possible operations in the Mediterranean, and to submit their recommendations for our future strategy in that theatre.

3. The Bombardment of Southern Italy.

The United States contingent for "TORCH" includes 300 bombers whose primary role will be the neutralisation of the aerodromes in Southern Spain, should the Axis acquire the use of them. It is hoped that a large part of this force will be

*Annex I.

available for any operations against Rommel which take place from Tunis and then for the air bombardment of Italy.

4. The Malta Force.

The Joint Staff is in touch with General Eisenhower's Staff on this matter, and the Chiefs of Staff await their proposals as to the plans and preparations which Lord Gort should be asked to set on foot. When their recommendations have been received, the Chiefs of Staff will communicate at once with Lord Gort.

5. The Advance into Tunisia.

The "Mission" given by General Eisenhower to General Anderson and his First Army is as follows:-

(i) To secure the port of ALGIERS and adjacent air fields;

(ii) To establish and maintain communications between ALGIERS and ORLEANSVILLE;

(iii) To build up rapidly a striking force through ALGIERS and adjacent ports;

(iv) To secure TUNISIA at the earliest possible date.

(Signed) H.L. ISMAY.

1ST OCTOBER, 1942.

18B

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 298th Meeting

Held on 23rd October 1942

4. MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY.

(C.O.S.(42) 320 (O)) — 16

(J.P.(42) 886.) — 17

18A recorded separately

THE COMMITTEE had a discussion[M] with the Directors of Plans and members of the Middle East Joint Planning Staff on our strategy in the Middle East and Mediterranean.

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C.O.S.(42) 158th Meeting (O)

Part of 298th Mtg min. 4

WAR CABINET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Part of C.O.S.(42)298th Meeting, held on FRIDAY, 23RD OCTOBER, 1942, at 10.30 a.m.

MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY.

THE COMMITTEE had before them:-

(i) A Review of Middle East Strategy by the Middle East Joint Planning Staff (C.O.S.(42) 320 (O)).

(ii) An Appreciation by the Joint Planning Staff of possible offensive operations in the Mediterranean following "Torch" (J.P.(42) 886).

SIR ALAN BROOKE said that apart from a difference of view regarding Sicily and Sardinia, there seemed to be general agreement here and in Cairo regarding our future strategy in the Middle East. He wished, however, to sound a note of warning against any tendency to under-estimate the German threat to Northern Persia through the Caucasus. Now that the Germans had reached the Caucasus Mountains, the threat existed and would continue to exist, and would compel us to lock up forces for the protection of our Northern Front in the Middle East. The only point that remained in doubt was the length of time which we should have to complete our preparations. It seemed that unless Russian resistance crumbled in the meanwhile, a heavy scale of attack by the Germans was unlikely to materialise before the summer of 1943.

In the meanwhile, it was most important that every effort should be made to strengthen and encourage Turkey, as a stimulant to Russian resistance and as a safeguard to our North-Western frontier. Our ultimate object should be to draw Turkey into the war on our side, thereby providing ourselves with bases for air attack on vital Axis targets in South-East Europe.

BRIGADIER PORTER said that the Commanders-in-Chief were fully alive to the threat which was developing on the Northern Front. The extent to which forces could be made available to meet this threat would depend mainly on the success of "Lightfoot".

SIR ALAN BROOKE said that the figures referred to in paragraph 20 of the Middle East Planners' Report did not appear to allow for the 'cannibalization" of two infantry divisions which would be necessary owing to the curtailment of Middle East reinforcements on account of "Torch". In addition, it appeared almost certain that the Ninth Australian Division would have to be returned to the Commonwealth at the end of the year.

On the other hand, if "Torch" went well, our Army in the Middle East would be reinforced by the First Army which, when North Africa had been cleared of the enemy, would probably be based on Egypt. On balance, the Middle East should, therefore, gain one division towards the liability in Persia.

BRIGADIER PORTER confirmed that the figures referred to in paragraph 20 did not allow for this reduction of three divisions.

Referring to Part III of their Report, Brigadier Porter said that the Commanders-in-Chief were very anxious that after the successful completion of "Lightfoot" and "Torch", operations should continue with the object of causing the Mediterranean theatre to become a heavy Axis liability. The presence of Allied forces along the Southern shores of the Mediterranean would not, of itself, cause a large diversion of enemy forces from other fronts.

SIR ALAN BROOKE said that he shared the views of the Commanders-in-Chief to some extent, and was eager to lose no opportunity of securing advanced island bases in the Mediterranean. He was not in favour, however, of venturing into the mainland of Europe until the Axis military power had been considerably weakened.

SIR CHARLES PORTAL pointed out that the presence of strong Allied forces on the shores of the Mediterranean, including some nine American divisions with a very large air component and all the assault shipping which was used for "Torch", would compel the Axis to lock up substantial forces in the various islands and peninsulas which could not be quickly reinforced.
The Axis would obtain no security in areas within striking distance of our forces unless their own reinforcements were actually in position.

In the course of further discussion, SIR ALAN BROOKE said that, looking well ahead, it seemed likely that French North Africa would become mainly an American sphere of activity. There would be no call on the Middle East for assistance in operations against Sardinia or Sicily, except possibly for a share of the assaulting forces.

LORD LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN said that practically all our resources in landing craft and trained personnel were committed to "Torch". We were thus dependent for future operations on the "Torch" "outfit", together with such craft as were provided from the United States. Any plans for combined operations based on Egypt should be made on the assumption that the bulk of the landing craft, crews, beach personnel, etc. would eventually be made available from the "Torch" theatre of operations. Combined operations against Rhodes and Crete would probably not be possible until after operations against Sardinia and/or Sicily.

SIR ALAN BROOKE, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the members of the Middle East Joint Planning Staff for their Review of the Middle East Strategy, which had been most valuable and interesting.

THE COMMITTEE:-

(a) Took note of the Review of Middle East Strategy prepared by the Middle East Joint Planning Staff.

(b) Agreed to give further consideration to the appreciation by the Joint Planning Staff after the Report on American-British Strategy had been finished.

Great George Street, S.W.1.

23rd October, 1942.

The circulation of this paper has been strictly limited. It is issued for the personal use of Brigadier Hollis (Mrs Bright)

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Printed for the War Cabinet. October 1942.

MOST SECRET. Copy No. 22

Circulated for the consideration of the Chiefs of Staff

J.P. (42) 886.

October 20, 1942.

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WAR CABINET.

Joint Planning Staff.

MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY.

Note by the Joint Planning Staff.

IN anticipation of instructions, we have examined the possibility of offensive operations in the Mediterranean following "Torch." Our appreciation is attached.*

2. We have also examined, in anticipation of instructions, the appreciation† approved by the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East, on "Middle East Strategy—October 1942." We have also discussed both appreciations with the Middle East Joint Planning Staff.

Our examination has shown that there is no substantial divergence of view between the Planning Staff in the Middle East and ourselves. There are no strategical points in the appreciation† approved by the Commanders-in-Chief on which we wish specially to comment.

C. E. LAMBE.
G. M. STEWART.
W. ELLIOT.

Cabinet War Room,
October 20, 1942.

* Annex.

† C.O.S. (42) 320 (O).

ANNEX.

Our strategic object in 1943 is to wear down Germany so as to open the way for an eventual re-entry to the Continent. To this end we intend to make a major effort in the Mediterranean in order to turn that area into an immense liability for Germany and thereby contribute relief to the Russian Front.

2. In this paper we examine the offensive possibilities in the Mediterranean.

ASSUMPTIONS.

3.—(*a*) "Torch" has been successful and we are in occupation of the whole of French North Africa.
(*b*) The Germans have not penetrated into Southern Caucasia.
(*c*) Offensive operations have been carried out by the Eighth Army against Axis forces in North Africa, but they are still in the field.
(*d*) Turkey is still neutral.

OUR OBJECT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

4. "Torch" and "Lightfoot" constitute the first steps in carrying out the policy in paragraph 1 above. Their aims are to give us control of the whole of North Africa, and ultimately to enable us to re-open the Mediterranean route to the Middle East. This latter aim must necessarily take a considerable time as it will depend on the establishment of extensive air forces and defence equipment in North Africa and the build up of large numbers of light naval craft.

5. We have, therefore, two broad objects in the Mediterranean:—

(*a*) To aggravate the Axis liability in that theatre (see paragraphs 15–22 below) and thereby contribute to the relief of Russia.
(*b*) To re-open the sea route. (See paragraphs 23–29.)

ENEMY COURSES OF ACTION.

6. Apart from any action which the Axis may take in support of their forces in North Africa which will be threatened from two sides after a successful "Torch," the broad courses of action open to the enemy in the defence of his position in the Mediterranean are:—

(a) To rely on direct defence of his Mediterranean flank.

7. Our successful occupation of French North Africa and such success as we gain from "Lightfoot" must force the enemy to take substantial defensive measures in direct defence of his Mediterranean flank. This is likely to include the reinforcement of Sicily, Sardinia and Crete, strengthening of A.A. and fighter defences in Italy and possibly the occupation of the south coast of France.

There are at present some three or four Italian divisions in both Sardinia and Sicily, and, if given sufficient time, we estimate the Axis would increase their garrisons to six and eight divisions and their air forces to 250 and 650 aircraft respectively.

(b) To strike through Turkey and/or into Persia at our Middle East oil and communications, and so interfere with our effort from the east.

8. An attack through Turkey is considered to be out of the question unless Russia has been defeated; this is now most unlikely before midsummer 1943 at the earliest, in which case an attack could not develop before September.

9. Although a German break-through into Southern Caucasia appears unlikely unless Russia is defeated, it must be realised that a collapse in the Caucasus area—where there are potential separatist movements—is possible, even if Russia as a whole is undefeated.

If a collapse occurred, the Germans would certainly exploit it into Persia as fast as they could, probably with the particular object of capturing the important Teheran area. Such exploitation could probably not exceed 4 to 5 divisions until communications had been developed.

10. A major attack on the northern front of our Middle East position is therefore most unlikely in any event before midsummer 1943 at the earliest.

(c) To strike through Spain to gain the northern shore of the Straits of Gibraltar and restrict our attack from the west.

11. Germany would probably adopt this course if she could provide the necessary forces to invade Spain, if she were prepared to accept the serious economic and administrative liability, and if she could subsequently provide and establish the necessary air forces to attack our communications through the Straits of Gibraltar. Successful action against these communications would undoubtedly provide the best, if not the only, means of defeating our Mediterranean offensive in the long run.

Such an attack might possibly be attempted before the defeat of Russia, but probably only if Spain acquiesces.

12. Whether or not Spain acquiesces will in turn depend largely on the vigour and success of our offensive action generally, and particularly in the Mediterranean. Proportionately with such success Spanish resistance will harden.

Conclusion on Enemy courses of action.

13. A major effort against our Middle East position is out of the question, in any event, unless Russia has been defeated.

Attack through Spain is also unlikely unless Russia has been defeated; but it is still possible. Its likelihood will decrease as our success increases.

Unless and until Russia is defeated—and this is unlikely before mid-1943 at the earliest—the Axis will probably have to be content with direct defence of their Mediterranean flank.

OUR SECURITY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

14. Despite the conclusion above that the Axis will probably have to be content with direct defence in the Mediterranean, Allied strategy must be conditioned by the latent threats to the flanks of this theatre. We shall not be able to judge the reality and urgency of these threats at least until after "Torch." Until therefore it is clear beyond doubt that the Axis will in fact rely on direct defence of the Mediterranean, we must retain the ability:—

(*a*) In the west, to seize Spanish Morocco;
(*b*) In the east, to reinforce the northern front of our Middle East position.

OBJECTIVES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

15. To aggravate the Axis liability in the Mediterranean we have the following choice of objectives :—

(*a*) South France;
(*b*) Balkans;
(*c*) Italy.

Our general strategy for the war against Germany does not envisage large-scale land operations against the Axis until German morale and powers of resistance have cracked. Our main effort in the Mediterranean must therefore be considered against this background.

South France.

16. It would be politically unwise to enter South France as long as it remains unoccupied by the Germans; and it would be tactically impossible to seize and maintain a bridgehead there from which the Germans could not easily evict us. Until a late stage in the war, therefore, we shall be limited in South France to raids and attacks on shipping, and irregular operations by patriots.

The Balkans.

17. Land operations in the Balkans are unlikely to be profitable owing to maintenance difficulties. But there is great scope for guerrilla activities and the intensification of sabotage; both might affect Axis oil supplies from Roumania and Axis land and sea communications with their new sources of supply in Russia.

18. If Turkey could eventually be persuaded to join the Allies, we could develop effective attacks on vital Axis oilfields and sea communications. The prospects of bringing Turkey into the war will remain small until the defeat of Germany is certain in Turkish eyes, despite any support which we might offer them in the meantime.

Italy.

19. There is clearly a good chance of turning Italy into a great liability to Germany.

20. Threats to Italy are likely to result in the recall home of Italian forces from Russia and the Balkans, and U-boats from the Atlantic. Substantial German land and air forces may also have to be brought in to support the Italians. If the Germans were unable to divert forces to Italy, there might be a revulsion of feeling against the Fascists and the Germans which might result in the virtual collapse of Italy.

21. Air, naval and limited land operations directed against Italian centres of industry and communications, together with adequate supplies for sabotage, will probably prove sufficient to turn Italy into a serious liability to Germany.

Conclusion on Objectives in the Mediterranean.

22. Our main effort in the Mediterranean should therefore be directed against Italy. Threats against the South of France and the Balkans will also extend the enemy.

KEY POINTS.

23. The key points in the Mediterranean are—

(*a*) Libya.
(*b*) Sardinia.
(*c*) Sicily.
(*d*) Crete and the Dodecanese.

In directing our main effort in the Mediterranean towards Italy, the capture of one or more of these key points must be first considered. We examine below the respective contribution which the capture of each would make towards turning the Mediterranean into the maximum Axis liability as well as towards reopening the through sea route.

Libya.

24. The elimination of Axis forces in North Africa would—

(i) remove the main threat to the Middle East and free the bulk of the Eighth Army and some air forces for operations elsewhere;
(ii) have an excellent effect on morale all over the world;
(iii) re-open the Eastern Mediterranean to a limited traffic.

Sardinia.

25. The capture of Sardinia would—

(i) open up the Western Mediterranean for a full flow of traffic as far as Tunisia;
(ii) clear the way for air, naval and land attacks over a wide arc from the South of France along the mainland of Italy to Sicily;
(iii) increase our ability to deny the Balearics to the Germans;
(iv) open the way for the occupation of Corsica;
(v) provide an air reinforcement route 155 miles shorter than that to Algiers.

Sicily.

26. The capture of Sicily would—

(i) be a far bigger prize than Sardinia, both politically and militarily;
(ii) open up the Malta Channel for a full flow of traffic;
(iii) permanently divide the Italian Fleet, or bottle it up in one half of the Mediterranean.
(iv) clear the way for an attack on Southern Italy and Greece.

Crete and the Dodecanese.

27. The capture of Crete and the Dodecanese would :—

(i) allow us to attain the full flow of traffic in the Eastern Mediterranean.
(ii) permit a high degree of control over the important Axis communications in the Mediterranean and Black Sea;
(iii) stiffen Turkey, and possibly—
(iv) open the way for action in the Balkans.

Effect on Opening the Mediterranean Sea Route.

28. We shall have taken a large step towards re-opening the Mediterranean once the whole of North African coast is in our hands. However, as long as the enemy holds the air and naval bases in Sardina, Sicily, Crete and the Dodecanese, we could not hope to pass regular convoys through the Mediterranean without excessive loss until we had established extensive air forces and defence equipment and amassed large numbers of light naval craft for use along the North African coast. Not only will it be many months before this programme could be completed, but the locking up of so many resources in this purely defensive role must inevitably detract greatly from the development of our offensive.

Conclusion on Key Points.

29. In the meantime the capture of Libya and of any of the above islands would be a step forward towards opening the through sea route to a full flow of traffic; the capture of Sardinia and Sicily, although undoubtedly formidable and costly undertakings, may well prove the quickest means to this end. When considered in conjunction with their influence on our ultimate objective—Italy, their capture is clearly of paramount importance.

COURSES OF ACTION.

30. These key points may be attacked either from the East or from the West, or from both simultaneously.

Action from the East.

31. Although unlikely to arise before the middle of 1943, the greatest potential danger to our offensive from the East would be an Axis threat through Turkey and/or the Caucasus, which would entail the withdrawal of substantial Allied forces from the Western Desert. It follows that the fate of the Axis forces in North Africa must be sealed as quickly as possible; the Eighth Army will then be free to provide forces for further action in other areas.

To eliminate these Axis forces a major overland attack must be made from the East, combined with such effort as can be developed against him from the West, both overland and against his sea communications.

Action from the West.

32. The greatest impediment to the development of our offensive from the West would be a German occupation of Southern Spain. Apart from direct military support to Spain, the measures best calculated to deter the Axis from going into Spain would appear to be :—

(*a*) rapid success in French North Africa (and Libya) thereby promoting Spanish belief in the possibility of Allied victory;
(*b*) the extension of economic benefits to Spain;
(*c*) the threat of Allied action across the Channel, *i.e.*, against the lines of communication of any German forces in the Iberian Peninsula; and
(*d*) continued Allied pressure on Axis interests in the Mediterranean.

33. As regards (*d*) above, further Allied pressure from the West might be directed against Axis forces in North Africa, against Sicily or Sardinia, or in both directions.

We must clearly be prepared to act against Axis forces in North Africa with all usable resources, but this will not necessarily preclude early operations against Sardinia or Sicily. If events turn out favourably we may get an opportunity—a fleeting one—to capture one or other of these islands at little cost. We should take advantage of that opportunity.

34. Although Sicily is undoubtedly the greater political and military prize, the capture of Sardinia would also be a wide threat to Axis interests. Since the opportunity to capture either may be only fleeting, and our resources after the capture of French North Africa will be small, the decision will have to be based on which Island is the easier to take and to hold.

On these grounds Sardinia appears the better choice, because—

(*a*) Preliminary examination has shown that smaller forces are needed to take and hold it.
(*b*) Enemy communications are much better to Sicily than to Sardinia.
(*c*) Our sea communications from the Western Mediterranean to Sardinia should be good, while those leading to Sicily would be difficult as long as Sardinia is in Axis hands.

35. Until the progress of "Lightfoot" and "Torch" and enemy reactions to these two operations become apparent, the balance between these requirements cannot be weighed. But clearly we should be fully prepared both to act against the rear of Axis forces in North Africa with all available forces and to seize what may be a fleeting opportuntly of capturing Sardinia before that island has been reinforced.

Action subsequent to Capture of Sardinia and Libya.

36. At this stage Allied action subsequent to the elimination of Axis forces from Africa and the capture of Sardinia can only be speculative. Broadly the possibilities are :—

In the West (assuming the Germans have not gone into Spain)—

(*a*) to capture Sicily;
(*b*) to extend the offensive by naval and air action, and limited land operations, to the mainland of Italy;
(*c*) to raid the coast of Southern France, possibly in conjunction with a cross-Channel operation against such an objective as a U-boat base.

In the East (assuming that there are no signs of a German break-through into Persia) :—

(*a*) to assist if necessary in the capture of Sicily;
(*b*) to co-operate offensively on the Southern Russian front;
(*c*) to support Turkey with a view to persuading her to join the Allies, and possibly,—
(*d*) to capture Crete and the Dodecanese.

CONCLUSIONS.

37.—Our conclusions are as follows:—

(a) Our main effort in the Mediterranean should be directed against Italy.

(b) In order to ensure that Axis forces in North Africa are out of the hunt before the Axis can strike through Turkey or the Caucasus, to deter the Axis from going through Spain, to increase the threat to Italy and therefore open the way for an attack on Sicily, and to take a further step towards the re-opening of the Mediterranean, we should first aim at—

(i) The elimination of Axis forces in North Africa from the east, together with such assistance as can be rendered from the west.

(ii) The capture of Sardinia from the west at the earliest opportunity.

38.—We recommend that:—

(a) This appreciation should be agreed with the American Chiefs of Staff.

(b) A copy of this appreciation should be given to General Eisenhower, who should be invited urgently to appoint a Task Force Commander and to state his requirements in forces for the capture of Sardinia which falls within his directive.

A fleeting opportunity to seize this island may well occur within two months from now.

(c) Copies of this appreciation should also be sent to the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East and Persia/Iraq.

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C.O.S.(42) 320 (O)

17TH OCTOBER, 1942.

WAR CABINET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

MIDDLE EAST JOINT PLANNING STAFF - MIDDLE EAST STRATEGY, OCTOBER 1942.

Note by Secretary

The attached Paper* by the Middle East Joint Planning Staff is circulated at the request of the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East, for consideration by the Chiefs of Staff.

2. This Paper has been agreed by Commander-in-Chief, Middle East, Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean and Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Middle East, but Commander-in-Chief, Persia/Iraq has not been consulted.

3. In anticipation of the instructions of the Chiefs of Staff this Paper has been referred to the Joint Planning Staff for examination and comment.

4. It is suggested that the Chiefs of Staff will wish to consider the attached Paper as soon as the comments by the Joint Planning Staff are received. It is proposed to invite the Middle East Joint Planning Staff to attend for this item.

(Signed) C.R. PRICE.

Great George Street, S.W.1.
17TH OCTOBER, 1942.

* J.P.S.,M.E. Paper No. 111 (Revised)

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MIDDLE EAST STRATEGY—OCTOBER 1942

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

The names of all personnel additional to those on the Distribution List who read this paper will be reported "Personal" to Lt.-Col. Heyman, G (Plans), G.H.Q., M.E.F

NOTE.—A Summary of Conclusions is contained in paragraphs 69 to 83.

ME/JP/41.

Middle East Joint Planning Staff,
General Headquarters,
Middle East, Cairo,
October 8, 1942.

[J.P.S., M.E., Paper No. 111 (Revised).

MIDDLE EAST STRATEGY—OCTOBER 1942.

Terms of Reference.

1. To review the strategic situation before, during and after the "Lightfoot"/"Torch" operations, with special reference to Middle East.

PART I.—"Lightfoot"/"Torch."

Object of "Lightfoot."

2. The primary object of "Lightfoot" is to destroy the Axis forces in North Africa. From this follows the secondary object—to occupy Cyrenaica and Tripolitania.

Object of "Torch."

3. We understand the object of "Torch" to be the occupation of French North Africa, including Tunisia, which is to be occupied by forces landed to the west of it.

Tunisia is the vital objective, since it controls one side of the narrow Sicilian Channel.

Timings.

4. "Lightfoot" is due to start about D-13 of "Torch." By this date the enemy is expected to realise that the "Torch" expedition is making either for West Africa or for the Mediterranean. He cannnot afford to neglect the latter and will therefore be placed in a dilemma as to which part of the Mediterranean, if any, to reinforce.

Enemy reactions to "Lightfoot."

5. The enemy is expected to try to maintain his position as far East as possible. He will therefore intensify his effort to increase his supplies and reinforcements to Libya by sea and air.

Enemy reactions to "Torch."

6. The enemy must be expected to realise his danger from the "Torch" expedition, and make every effort to move forces into the Mediterannean theatre. The degree to which the Germans will be able to do this, particularly with air forces, will depend on the Russian situation, though the onset of winter on the Russian front may be expected to release air forces, as in 1941 for attack on Malta. Transfer will probably take some weeks.

German land forces, although not of the highest quality, could probably be found from France and Germany.

Italian air and land reinforcements are, of course, available in Italy itself.

Enemy courses of action to counter "Torch."

7. The enemy may take one or more of the following courses:—

(*a*) Reinforce the Mediterranean area generally.
(*b*) Occupy the Tunis–Bizerta area.

It is doubtful whether Italians would be welcome to the French, who might resist them. The only German forces immediately available are air forces in Sicily.

(*c*) Move through Spain to occupy the North side of the Straits of Gibraltar, and/or occupy the Balearics.

This might conceivably be resisted by the Spaniards.

Counter-action by us.

8. The possible enemy moves detailed above must have been foreseen, but we do not know what counter-action has been planned. Enemy occupation of Tunisia can only be forestalled by the speed of our own occupation. An enemy move to the north shore of the Straits of Gibraltar and/or the Balearics has

presumably been catered for in "Torch." The reinforcement of Southern Italy, Sicily, Sardinia and the Ægean cannot be countered during these operations, except possibly to a small degree by air and sabotage action, and by submarines.

9. Enemy occupation of Tunisia can be forestalled by the speed of our own occupation, or interfered with by naval and air action. In the course of these operations, therefore, a decision may be required as to whether a part of the naval (submarine) and air effort of the Middle East will have to be switched to the Central Mediterranean to assist "Torch."

In this connection, the short-range submarines based on Malta could carry out longer patrols in support of "Torch" than of "Lightfoot." On the other hand, it will be of utmost importance to prevent enemy supplies and reinforcements reaching Libya.

We feel, therefore, that Middle East can probably best play its part initially by devoting all its efforts to the support of "Lightfoot," being prepared to switch Naval and Air forces to the assistance of "Torch" as the situation develops.

10. Malta could assist "Torch" by interfering with an Axis move into Tunisia, and possibly with the reinforcement of Sicily. The former could be done by attacking Axis shipping and mining or blocking Tunisian harbours. The overriding factor is to refuel Malta before "Torch" opens in order to exert our full air effort against Axis attempts to forestall "Torch."

Malta Convoy from the East.

11. In our view, to run a convoy from the East before we have the use of the Derna aerodromes and have also denied to the enemy the use of the aerodromes near Benghazi will make the passage of the convoy extremely hazardous. Once in this position it should be possible to provide fighter protection for the convoy, to attack the Italian Fleet by air striking forces, and to stage an effective diversion. In the very best circumstances, however, it will be a month after "Lightfoot" opens before we reach Benghazi, and it is likely to be considerably longer.

French Reaction.

12. One result of "Torch" may be a declaration of war on the United Nations by Vichy France. Apart from resistance in French North Africa, we should have to meet a threat from the French fleet in the Western Mediterranean, and to our West African possessions (particularly Freetown and Bathurst) from French West Africa.

Presumably, these potential threats have been allowed for in connection with "Torch."

We might also have to deal with Jibuti and the French ships at Alexandria.

On the other hand, should the French in North Africa give us active assistance "Torch" ought to forestall the enemy in Tunisia. Some help in blocking French harbours which we should not want to use ourselves could be given from Malta. Moreover, it will make easier the joint action of the air forces of Malta and of those of "Torch" established in Tunisia.

Interplay "Lightfoot" and "Torch."

13. "Lightfoot" and "Torch" will render little direct assistance to each other, but the indirect effects should be considerable.

14. "Lightfoot" can help "Torch" as follows:—

(*a*) By pinning down and weakening the Axis land and air forces in North Africa, and also Axis shipping and convoy escorts, both sea and air, in the Eastern Mediterranean.
(*b*) If successful in its early stages, by influencing French and Spanish opinion in our favour.
(*c*) If "Lightfoot" is successful and "Torch" only partially so, "Lightfoot" may be able to occupy Tunisia by land from the South.

On the other hand, "Torch" may be in a position to seize Tripoli before "Lightfoot" can reach it.

Result of "Lightfoot" and "Torch."

15. A successful conclusion to the "Lightfoot"/"Torch" operations is only the first step in reopening the Mediterranean. So long as Sardinia, Sicily and Crete (particularly Sicily) remain in enemy hands the Axis scale

of air attack will continue to be a heavy one, and the possibility of attack from the Italian Fleet remains. Hence the Naval and Air effort required to pass convoys through the Mediterranean will be very considerable and casualties to ships will be unavoidable.

It would be unwise to attempt operations against Sardinia, Sicily and Crete before we have secured North Africa, but their capture will greatly increase the security of the Mediterranean route.

Conclusions on Part I.

16.—(*a*) "Lightfoot" and "Torch" can give considerable indirect assistance to each other in their early stages and possibly direct assistance later on.

(*b*) Malta can give great assistance if supplied with the necessary means, particularly aviation fuel.

(*c*) A convoy to Malta from the East will be an extremely hazardous venture until we have obtained the use of the Derna aerodromes and denied the use of the Benghazi aerodromes to the enemy.

(*d*) The "Lightfoot"/"Torch" operations are only a first step towards reopening the Mediterranean sea route. They must be successfully completed before any move northwards across the Mediterranean is made.

PART II.—Position of Middle East on Completion of "Lightfoot."

Navy.

17. The Mediterranean Fleet at present consists of—

5 Cruisers,
8 Fleet destroyers,
9 Hunt destroyers,
18 Submarines,

corvettes, escort vessels, minesweepers, A/S vessels, M.T.Bs., &c. The fleet is small, but its effectiveness cannot be judged on size alone, since it is assisted in the task of securing sea communications by the R.A.F. air striking force (see paragraph 28). When it becomes necessary to run convoys to Benghazi, Tripoli and Malta, a large number of additional A/S vessels will be required.

18. Landing craft at present on the station are capable of lifting a force of approximately the following composition :—

One brigade group (greatly reduced transport).
One Army Tank battalion.
One battery field artillery.
R.A.F. ground component.

All the landing craft have seen much service, and as it is intended that they shall be employed on army supply during "Lightfoot" many of them will be unserviceable by the time "Lightfoot" is completed.

19. There are no Tank Landing Ships, L.C.M. carrying ships or Infantry Assault ships on the station.

Army.

20. At Appendix A is a table showing a possible distribution of M.E. land forces after the completion of "Lightfoot" on the assumption that there is no threat from Tunisia, Turkey or the Caucasus.

It will be seen that if we ignore losses in the "Lightfoot" battle a balance of the nature of two Armoured and four Infantry divisions and 24 G.T. Coys. will remain. These figures will probably be reduced to about—

1 Armd. Div.
3 Inf. Divs.
16 G.T. Coys.

as a result of the "Lightfoot" campaign.

Possible Army Commitments.

21. The forces shown above will only be available for operations outside the Middle East if there is no possibility of an enemy threat developing in Turkey or the Caucasus. Our possible commitments in these theatres are—

Ninth Army.

(a) *Assistance to Turkey.*—Various plans exist for sending air assistance to Turkey. The Army commitment in these plans varies from one to four brigade groups. Twelve G.T. Coys. will be required for the L. of C.

Tenth Army.

(b) *Caucasus threat only.*—To bring Persia/Iraq Force up to minimum requirement of two Armd. and seven Inf. divs. } One Inf. Div. One Armd. Div. Fifteen G.T. Coys.

Ninth and Tenth Armies.

(c) *Anatolian threat only.*—The full requirement to meet this threat is :—

Ninth Army : 2 Armd., 6 Inf. Divs. and eleven G.T. Coys. for Syrian Frontier.

Tenth Army : 1 Armd., 3 Inf. Divs. and eleven G.T. Coys. for Iraq Frontier.

The Tenth Army component can be found from Persia/Iraq Force so long as there is no threat from the Caucasus. Assuming the force available from Eighth Army (paragraph 20) is given to Ninth Army, our overall deficiency will be one armoured and three infantry divs.

(d) *Simultaneous Anatolian and Caucasian threats.*—If a threat develops simultaneously from Turkey and the Caucasus, Persia/Iraq Force will not be able to spare forces for the defence of the Northern Iraq Frontier. Situation will then be :—

	Armd. Div.	*Inf. Div.*	*G.T. Coys.*
Tenth Army—			
Additional troops required in Caucasus ...	1	...	15
Troops required defence N. Iraq	1	2	11
Ninth Army—			
Troops required defence Syria	2	6	11
Total requirements	4	8	37
Available ex Eighth Army (paragraph 20) ...	1	3	16
Overall deficiency	3	5	21

22. There are also certain other minor Army commitments in Southern Arabia if the Naval situation in the Indian Ocean should deteriorate.

A.A.

23. So long as the enemy air threat from Crete, Greece and the Dodecanese remains, little reduction can be made in the existing A.A. defences of Egypt, Palestine and Syria, so far as Army and Navy tasks are concerned. On the other hand, as new operational aerodromes are occupied in Libya, old ones can be given up further East.

24. Army and Naval requirements in Libya will therefore have to be found from the present Eighth Army allotment. The probable new commitments are :—

	Heavy.	*Light.*
Port Defence, Tripoli	24	36
" " Benghazi	24	36
" " Tobruk	24	36
Div. Lt. A.A. for 2 Armd. Divs. ... ... } 3 Inf. Divs. ... ... }	...	180
R.H., &c.	16	72
	88	360
Total now with Eighth Army ...	48	480
Difference	−40	+120

The 120 Light A.A. guns shown spare above will not quite meet the normal divisional allotment for the force in paragraph 20.

Air.

NOTE.—It is emphasised that all the arguments and conclusions in this section of the paper have been based on the estimated number of squadrons available at the 1st January, 1943. Unless, however, the inflow of new aircraft to the Middle East is increased, it will only be possible to maintain air forces on one active front.

Air Forces Available.

25. On the 1st January, 1943, we should have approximately 87 squadrons available, including U.S.A.F. (For details see Appendix B.)

Air Forces Required.

26. The minimum air forces we estimate will be needed to meet various commitments after the capture of Libya are given in detail in Appendix B.

Mediterranean Area.

27. Our minimum requirements in North Africa, Malta and the Eastern Mediterranean amount to 46 Squadrons made up as shown in Appendix B.

28. Almost the whole of this force will be engaged either in the protection of shipping or will form part of the North African striking force, the primary rôles of which are attack of enemy naval forces and merchant shipping and the support of our land forces in event of an attempted enemy seaborne landing in Libya, Egypt, Levant or Cyprus. The balance of the force is sufficient only to meet our defensive requirements in Malta, the Delta and Cyprus.

29. Only by drastically reducing our flow of shipping, through the Mediterranean and ceasing our offensive against enemy sea communications, would it be possible to decrease the force outlined above.

30. We therefore regard the provision of our minimum air requirements for North Africa as a permanent commitment. On the 1st January, 1943, having met this commitment and providing we are able to withdraw all fighter aircraft from the Indian Ocean, the air forces available for disposal in other theatres will amount to:—

SEF	LB	MB	HB	A.C. (F/B/R)	Strat Recce.	PRU	TPT	
14	10	5	5	5	1	1	1	=40 Squadrons. + 2 Flights.

Other Possible Commitments.

31. Outside the Mediterranean area we have two principal tasks:—

(*a*) To assist in controlling sea communications in the Indian Ocean.
(*b*) To provide air forces for the Northern Front.

The Indian Ocean.

32. The problem in the Indian Ocean involves the provision of a force of short-range and long-range reconnaissance aircraft and a limited number of fighter squadrons for the defence of key ports. Our estimated resources will enable us to meet the first requirement. We are not in a position to assess the future threat to the Indian Ocean ports within the boundaries of this Command, but it may be possible for us to withdraw or withhold fighter squadrons employed for their defence.

The Northern Front.

33. On the Western section of this Front, the enemy threat may develop against or through Turkey; on the Eastern Section we may find it necessary to send air forces to Trans-Caucasia or to Persia. In the worst case we may be involved simultaneously along the whole Front.

Air forces required to meet any one of these situations are shown in detail at Appendix B.

34. The following table summarises the various deficiencies with which we might be faced on the Northern Front in various circumstances, should we have to send forces to that front and also meet our full fighter commitments in the Indian Ocean.

Operational Area.	Number of Squadrons deficient.														
	SEF	TEF (D)	TEF (N)	LB	MB	HB	TB	TB WELL	ASV	GR	AC (FBR)	Strat /R	PRU	Tpt	Comm
Caucasus ...	3	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	3*	...
Persia	3	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Turkey	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Levant and Iraq (Turkey acquiescing) ...	10	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	1	1	1	2

* Deficiency may be made up by units of U.S.A.F.

If we are able to withdraw fighter aircraft from the Indian Ocean, the deficiencies in S.E.F. shown above can be decreased by up to a maximum to six squadrons.

Conclusions on Part II.

Navy.

35. No special ships and insufficient landing craft for major combined operations are available in the Middle East. Our Naval forces, on their own, are too weak to deal with the Italian Fleet, but are assisted by our air forces in the task of securing sea communications.

Army.

36. After conclusion of "Lightfoot" a force of about—

1 Armd. Div.,
3 Inf. Divs.,
16 G.T. Coys.,

may become available for operations elsewhere.

37. This force is sufficient to bring Persia/Iraq Force up to the minimum required to meet the estimated scale of enemy attack through the Caucasus and at the same time to provide the largest planned Army component in our existing plans for operating air forces in support of Turkey.

38. If not used as above, it is sufficient to bring our deficiencies in our Northern Front forces down to the following figures:—

	Armd. Divs.	Inf. Divs.	G.T. Coys.
Anatolian threat only	1	3	...
Simultaneous Anatolian and Caucasian threats	3	5	21

39. After the conclusion of "Lightfoot" we will be about 40 Heavy A.A. guns short of our requirements even if we assume no threat in Turkey or the Caucasus. There will only be sufficient light A.A. guns available to provide a divisional allotment for the force in paragraph 36 above.

40. If there is any threat to the Northern Front there will be no Army force available in the Middle East for new operations elsewhere in the Mediterranean area.

Air.

41. The air forces necessary to meet our minimum offensive and defensive requirements in North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean are a permanent commitment (but see paragraph 66).

42. After meeting this commitment, and if the situation allows us to withdraw fighter aircraft from our Indian Ocean Bases—

(*a*) We should be able to send air forces as planned to the Caucasus or Persia or Turkey.
(*b*) If Turkey submits to Germany, our air forces will be 12 squadrons short of our minimum requirements, six of them being single-engine fighters.
(*c*) If a simultaneous threat should develop against or through Turkey and North Persia, our air forces will be quite inadequate to meet it.

43. If any of the commitments in paragraph 42 above arise, there will be no air forces available for further offensive operations in the Mediterranean.

44. The planned flow of aircraft will be quite inadequate to maintain active operations on more than one front.

PART III.—Future Strategy after Completion of "Lightfoot"/"Torch."

Strategical Policy.

45. The main object of the United Nations is to defeat Germany, and any offensive in the Mediterranean theatre should be related to that object.

46. Our strategy in the Mediterranean theatre should therefore aim at :—

(*a*) Completing the reopening of the Mediterranean, thus saving the uneconomical voyage round the Cape.
(*b*) Advancing our air bases nearer to desirable targets.
(*c*) Obtaining a foothold in Europe.

Reopening the Mediterranean.

47. The free use of sea communications through the Mediterranean is the essential basis of any future offensive in that theatre.

Our first object must therefore be to complete the process of which the "Torch"/"Lightfoot" operations are the first stage.

48. Although we shall have occupied North Africa, the enemy will still be in a position to interfere with our sea communications from his naval and air bases to the Northward. The nearest of these are Sicily, Sardinia and Crete.*

Sicily.

49. The Sicilian channel is the most vulnerable bottleneck on our through sea communications, and the capture of Sicily would go further to reopening them than any other course we would take. It is favourably situated for combined action by forces from the West and from the East. Tunisia provides an advance base of ample capacity; Malta and Pantellaria are stepping-stones into Sicily.

50. Sicily, however, is of such value to the enemy that we must expect strong opposition. His Naval bases (and those of the French) are close to our own lines of communication and Italy itself is the main Axis base in the Mediterranean, from which he can conveniently reinforce Sicily.

Sardinia.

51. The capture of Sardinia would give us the important naval bases of Cagliari and Maddelena and would reduce the enemy threat to our shipping in the Western Mediterranean.

Our main difficulty would be the provision of fighter cover for a landing, which would entail the use of carriers within close range of enemy bases.

Crete.

52. The capture of Crete would reduce the scale of attack against our sea communications, especially in the area between Crete and Cyrenaica.

Its capture in existing circumstances entails the prior occupation of the Dodecanese, for which the use of air bases in Anatolia is necessary.

53. If, however, the German land and air forces have been withdrawn from the Ægean area and are so committed elsewhere that rapid reinforcement is judged impracticable, its capture without the use of aerodromes in Anatolia might be feasible. Such conditions are unlikely to obtain by the time we are in a position to launch an attack against Sicily and/or Sardinia.

Conclusions.

54. The capture of Sicily goes much further towards achieving our object than the capture of Sardinia and/or Crete. Enemy opposition is likely to be

* To prevent interference by enemy naval and air forces, our air forces must be positioned in overwhelming strength so as to neutralise the Italian Fleet and if possible drive it from the Central Basin. Similarly the air threat to our shipping from Sicily, Sardinia and Crete is best countered by the capture of these islands, or until this can be done by the use of overwhelming air power.

strongest in Sicily. The provision of fighter cover is the main difficulty in the way of a landing in Sardinia, and, for the same reason, the capture of Crete would probably entail the use of Turkish aerodromes and preliminary operations against the Dodecanese.

55. We therefore recommend the capture of Sicily as first priority in spite of the strong opposition we are likely to meet; and of Sardinia as second priority. If resources permit these two operations should be carried out concurrently. The capture of Crete is the least important, and will depend on factors difficult to forecast at this stage—the attitude of Turkey and the strength of enemy opposition in the area.

Part to be played by Mideast.

56. The best contribution by Mideast would be assistance to the main operations against Sicily.

Raids and minor operations by Mideast in the Eastern Mediterranean might also be of value as diversions.

To obtain a foothold in Europe and to advance our air bases nearer to desirable targets.

57. These two objects are closely interrelated. Moreover, by capturing Sicily and Sardinia and completing the opening of the Mediterranean (our first object), we shall have advanced our air bases to within close range of Italian naval and air bases and important industrial areas on the Italian mainland.

58. Two main courses then lie open to us :—

(*a*) To advance into Italy.
(*b*) To advance through Turkey and/or Greece.

Advance into Italy.

59. The advantages of this approach are :—

(*a*) It eliminates one of the principal Axis partners from the war.
(*b*) Italy has well-developed communications and air facilities.
(*c*) The scale of air attack we could bring to bear on Italy from Tunisia, Sicily and Sardinia is likely to reduce Italian morale to a low state, perhaps in quite a short time, and to reduce the Italian battle fleet to impotence.
(*d*) It is well situated for a combined effort from the West and the East.
(*e*) It brings us close to active supporters in Yugoslavia and Greece, which might result in disrupting Axis communications in the Ægean area.

60. The disadvantages are :—

(*a*) It is the main Mediterranean base for Axis forces and we are likely to meet strong opposition from German forces in difficult country. Germany will certainly do all she can to prevent Italy being knocked out of the war.
(*b*) Further overseas operations from Africa, Sicily, Malta and possibly Sardinia are involved.

Advance through Turkey as an Ally.

61. Should this prove possible, the advantages of this approach are :—

(*a*) An overland move is possible and initially no oversea operations would be necessary.
(*b*) We acquire aerodromes in Anatolia from which we can attack vital objectives in South-East Europe and neutralise the Dodecanese.
(*c*) We should control the Dardanelles and might be able to open a new supply route to Russia.
(*d*) A further move into the Balkans via Thrace is possible.

62. The disadvantages are :—

(*a*) Communications in Anatolia are so poor that only very limited forces can be maintained by them.
(*b*) We should very soon have to supply the Turkish forces and this would entail opening the Ægean.
(*c*) It would be difficult for forces from the West to assist unless Sicily, and possibly Sardinia, were first captured.
(*d*) Turkey's attitude is uncertain and we cannot plan on it.

Greece.

63. The advantages of this approach are—

(*a*) We should have a friendly population to assist us.
(*b*) We should acquire aerodromes within range of Italy and could attack targets in South-East Europe.
(*c*) We should in due course turn the Axis forces out of the Eastern Mediterranean.

64. The disadvantages are—

(*a*) We cannot move into Greece without first occupying Crete.
(*b*) Communications in Greece are poor and the country is more difficult for operations than Italy.
(*c*) The mountainous area to the North would restrict bombing operations and any subsequent advance.
(*d*) Contact with the Yugoslavs is not so easy as from Italy.

Selection of Best Course.

65. In spite of the greater opposition we should have to overcome probably by German forces, we recommend the approach through Italy for the following reasons :—

(*a*) We should be well placed for a preliminary air offensive, with its consequent effect on Italian morale.
(*b*) It adds further to the security of the through Mediterranean sea route.
(*c*) It knocks one of the principal Axis partners out of the war.
(*d*) It is well placed for a combined effort by forces from the West and East.

NOTE.—If Vichy France declared war on us, an alternative move might be made to the industrial North of Italy via Sardinia, Corsica and the Riviera, but the French and Italian battle fleets would have to be neutralised first.

Assistance by Mideast.

66. It will be seen from Part II of this paper that if there is a threat to the Northern Front Mideast is not likely to have any considerable resources available for further offensive action after the "Torch"/"Lightfoot" operations.

67. On the other hand, Mideast has a firmly established base from which extra forces could operate if made available. The occupation of North Africa and the subsequent operations suggested in Part III of this paper present very great opportunities for the offensive use of air forces. It would therefore seem profitable to allot to Mideast the maximum air forces that its maintenance organisation can absorb.

This raises the question of whether it is better to commit an air contingent to assist the Russians in the Caucasus or to retain it for operations in the Mediterranean.

Similarly, the naval bases at Alexandria and Malta can, if required, operate much larger forces than are at present available.

68. Apart from the action suggested above, we consider that any forces that are available in Mideast at the time should be employed to support the main operations designed to re-open the Mediterranean and knock out Italy. Diversionary operations towards the Ægean might also help, but we consider that they should not be allowed to weaken our effort in the Central Mediterranean.

PART IV.—Summary of Conclusions.

"*Lightfoot*"/"*Torch*."

69.—(*a*) "Lightfoot" and "Torch" can give considerable indirect assistance to each other in their early stages and possibly direct assistance later on.
(*b*) Malta can give great assistance if supplied with the necessary means, particularly aviation fuel.
(*c*) A convoy to Malta from the East will be an extremely hazardous venture until we have obtained the use of the Derna aerodromes and denied the use of the Benghazi aerodromes to the enemy.

(*d*) The "Lightfoot"/"Torch" operations are only a first step towards reopening the Mediterranean sea route. They must be successfully completed before any move Northwards across the Mediterranean is made.

Forces available on completion of "Lightfoot."

Navy.

70. No special ships and insufficient landing craft for major combined operations are available in the Middle East. Our Naval forces on their own are too weak to deal with the Italian Fleet, but are assisted by our air forces in the task of securing sea communications.

Army.

71. After conclusion of "Lightfoot" a force of about—

1 Armd. Div.
3 Inf. Divs.
16 G.T. Coys.

may become available for operations elsewhere.

72. This force is sufficient to bring Persia/Iraq Force up to the minimum required to meet the estimated scale of enemy attack through the Caucasus and at the same time to provide the largest planned Army component in our existing plans for operating air forces in support of Turkey.

73. If not used as above it is sufficient to bring our deficiencies in our Northern Front forces down to the following figures :—

	Armd. Divs.	*Inf. Divs.*	*G.T. Coys.*
Anatolian threat only ...	1	3	...
Simultaneous Anatolian and Caucasian threats ...	3	5	21

74. After the conclusion of "Lightfoot" we will be about 40 Heavy A.A. guns short of our requirements even if we assume no threat in Turkey or the Caucasus. There will only be sufficient light A.A. guns available to provide a divisional allotment for the force in paragraph 71 above.

75. If there is any threat to the Northern Front there will be no Army force available in the Middle East for new operations elsewhere in the Mediterranean area.

Air.

76. The air forces necessary to meet our minimum offensive and defensive requirements in North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean are a permanent commitment. (But see paragraph 82.)

77. After meeting this commitment and if the situation allows us to withdraw fighter aircraft from our Indian Ocean Bases :—

(*a*) We should be able to send air forces as planned to the Caucasus or Persia or Turkey.
(*b*) If Turkey submits to Germany our air forces will be 12 squadrons short of our minimum requirements, six of them being single-engine fighters.
(*c*) If a simultaneous threat should develop against or through Turkey and North Persia, our air forces will be quite inadequate to meet it.

78. If any of the commitments in paragraph 77 above arise, there will be no air forces available for further offensive operations in the Mediterranean.

79. The planned flow of aircraft will be quite inadequate to maintain active operations on more than one front.

Future Strategy after completion of "Lightfoot"/"Torch."

80. Our first aim should be to complete the reopening of the Mediterranean. For this, the capture of Sicily is first priority, and of Sardinia second priority. The capture of Crete is the least important of the three.

81. Thereafter, our aim should be to obtain a foothold in Europe and advance our air bases.

In this the approach via Italy is preferable to the approaches via Turkey or Greece.

82. The capture of North Africa will produce great opportunities for offensive Naval and air action. This raises the question of whether it is wise to commit an air contingent for the assistance of the Russians in the Caucasus, which might otherwise be used in the Central Mediterranean.

83. In the conditions likely to arise, the best task for the Middle East would be to lend direct assistance to our main offensive in the Central Mediterranean, coupled with raids and diversions in the Ægean area.

APPENDIX "A".

DISTRIBUTION OF M.E. LAND FORCES AFTER OCCUPATION TRIPOLITANIA.

Assuming: (*a*) No threat from Tunisia.
(*b*) No threat from or through Turkey.
(*c*) No threat through Caucasus.

(*a*) Serial No.	(*b*) Zone.	(*c*) Required.		(*d*) Details of Bdes. in Divs. in Col. (*c*) or Independent Bdes.			(*e*) Independent Bns., &c.		(*f*) G.T. Coys.	(*g*) Remarks.
		Armd. Divs.	Inf. Divs.	Armd. Bde.	Lorried or Motor Bde.	Inf. Bde.	Armd. Regt.	Inf. Bns.		
1	Libya	2	3	3	2	8	...	...	14(i)	(i) Assumes maintenance through Tripoli by sea and Tobruk by rail.
2	Egypt	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	20(ii)	(ii) Including G.H.Q. reserve of 10 Coys.
3	Ninth Army	...	...	...	...	2(iii)	...	...	4(iv)	(iii) Including 1 F.F. Bde.
4	Palestine	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	8(v)	(iv) Assumes no work services.
5	Cyprus	...	1	...	...	3	...	1	1	(v) For construction programme.
6	Malta	...	...	...	...	4(vi)	...	...	...	(vi) Including 3 Bns. K.O.M.R.
7	Sudan	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	3(vii)	(vii) For works, &c.
8	Aden	...	...	...	..	...	...	1	...	(viii) Excluding 2 British Parachute Bns. on November 15.
9	Total required	2	4	4	2	18	...	7	50	(ix) Including 2 F.F. and 1 S.D.F. Bdes.
10	Total available...	4	8	8	3	30	3	7(viii)	74	
11	Balance...	2	4	4	1	12(ix)	3	...	24	

NOTE.—The figures shown for G.T. Coys. required are necessarily conjectural. They are minimum figures and may be found to be low.

APPENDIX "B."

Air Forces.

Possible Middle East Commitments Showing Minimum Estimated Requirements.

	SEF	TEF (D)	TEF (N)	LB	MB	HB	TB Beau	TB Well	ASV	GR	FB	AC FBR	STRAT/R	PRU	PSU	SIGS	TPT	COMM
(A) *North African Coast*—																		
Tripoli, Misurata, Benghazi, Barce, Derna, Tobruk, Matruh, Alexandria, Port Said	9	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
(B) *North African Striking Force*—																		
Attack of enemy shipping, LGs and other objectives—																		
Alexandria	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Derna	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
El Adem area	...	...	...	...	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
Support of Army and striking force reserve—																		
El Adem area	...	..	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	2	1
Miscellaneous—																		
Egypt	...	...	...	.	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	1
Tripoli	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Benghazi	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...		...	...	...	...	...	1
(C) *Defence of Canal and Delta*	see (A)	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
(D) *Levant*—Defence of Haifa—Cyprus ...	1	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
(E) *Malta*...	4	1	1	...	...	...	1	1¶	1¶	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
(F) *Indian Ocean*—																		
Aden	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
E. Africa	4	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Iraq—																		
Bahrein	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
(G) *Persia*—																		
Offensive Persia/Iraq	9	1	...	3	2	2/4	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	1	...	...	1	1
Defensive Iraq	2	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
(H) *Caucasus*—																		
In Caucasus (ME composit.)	8	1	...	3	2	2	...	...	1	1	...	..	1	1	...	...	4‖	1
In Persia/Iraq	3	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
(J) *Turkey*—																		
SPRAWL in Turkey	12	1	...	6	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	1	1	...	...	2	1
In Levant, Tripoli, Aleppo	2	...	...	...	...	2/4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
(K) *Levant and Iraq*—																		
Turkey acquiesces to Germany—																		
Levant	12	...	...	6	2	2/3	...	1	1	...	...	2	1	1	...	...	1	1
Cyprus	2	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Iraq	4	1	...	3	2	2	...	...	...	..	...	1	1	1	...	...	1	1
A B C D E F + G	31	4	3	5	4	4/8	5	2	2	5	5	3	2	3	1	1	3	4
A B C D E F + H	31	4	3	5	4	4/6	5	2	3	6	5	1	2	3	1	1	6‖	4
A B C D E F + J	34	4	2	8	4	4/8	5	2	2	5	5	4	2	3	1	1	4	4
A B C D E F + K	38	4	2	11	6	6/7	6	2	3	6	5	4	3	4	1	1	4	5
Estimated M.E. Order of Battle January 1, 1943—																		
R.A.F.	22	3	2	10*	6	3†	2	1½	1½	4‡	5	6§	2 Flt.	3 Flt.	2 Flt.	1	3	1
U.S.A.	6	...	...	2	1	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	28	3	2	12*	7	7†	2	1½	1½	4‡	5	6§	2 Flt.	3 Flt.	2 Flt.	1	3	1

* 4 Acting G.R.
† Includes 1 on loan from India.
‡ 1 Composite.
§ Includes 2 H.D.
‖ Includes U.S.A.
¶ Or operate from N. Africa depending on situation Malta.

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 155th Meeting (O) (part of item 7)

Held on 21st October 1942

part of C.O.S.(42) 295th Mtg item 4.

(iv) Exploitation

GENERAL EISENHOWER said that he was already considering the question of any further operations which might become desirable as a result of an entirely successful TORCH and that he intended to take with him, when he left this country, all available details in order that planning for assaults on Sicily and Sardinia could proceed on the assumption that TORCH would achieve swift success. He recognised that it would be all-important to proceed with these operations before the enemy had had time to build up his defences, but he considered that any decision to launch operations which entailed leaving the North African mainland should be taken by the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

THE COMMITTEE:-

(f) Took note with approval of General Eisenhower's statement.

14

Part of 288th mtg.

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 144th Meeting (O)

Held on 14th October 1942

3. PLANNING OF FUTURE OPERATIONS IN THE MEDITTERANEAN. -12

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(42)144th Meeting (O), Minute 1).

-13

THE COMMITTEE had before them a minute, dated 12th October, by Major General Ismay (copies circulated personally to each Chief of Staff) reporting the result of his discussion with General Eisenhower on the planning of operations for the occupation of Sardinia and/or Sicily, if "TORCH" were quickly successful.

General Eisenhower had said that he was fully alive to the necessity for making plans of this nature and, in his judgment, his present Directive gave him all the authority that he needed to undertake these operations, if an opportunity should present itself.

THE COMMITTEE -

Took note with approval of the position as disclosed above.

Ref. C.O.S. (43) 147th Mtg. (O) minute 2. Col. Jacob 13

Agenda III/10

Eight copies typed and circulated as follows:-

1.} C.I.G.S.
2.}
3.} I.S.L.
4.}
5.} C.A.S.
6.}
7. Mr Jones.
8. General Ismay File copy.

12.10.42.

MOST SECRET.

C.I.C.S.
FIRST SEA LORD.
C.A.S.

COPY NO. 8

The Chiefs of Staff at their Meeting on the 10th October (see C.O.S.(42) 144th Meeting (O), Minute 1) instructed me to discuss with General Eisenhower the question of whether he would welcome an amendment to his Directive on the lines suggested in paper No. J.P.(42) 867 of the 9th October, 1942. 12 — see Folder A

2. I saw General Eisenhower today. He told me that he was fully alive to the necessity of making plans for the capture of Sardinia and Sicily and that, in his judgment, his present Directive gave him all the authority that he needed to undertake those operations if an opportunity should present itself.

3. This minute will be placed on the Agenda of the Chiefs of Staff Meeting on Wednesday, the 14th October.

(Signed) H. L. ISMAY.

12th October, 1942.

12

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S. (42) 144th Meeting (O)

Held on 10th October 1942

Part of C.O.S.(42)285th Meeting, held on Saturday, 10TH OCTOBER, 1942, at 10.30 a.m.

1. PLANNING OF FUTURE OPERATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

(J.P.(42)867).

THE COMMITTEE had before them a note by the Joint Planning Staff covering a draft telegram to the Joint Staff Mission drawing attention to the importance of making plans for the capture of Sardinia and Sicily, and suggesting an amendment to General Eisenhower's Directive.

In discussion it was agreed that if "TORCH" were quickly successful, a fleeting opportunity might well occur for the occupation of Sardinia or Sicily at comparatively little cost. It was, however, understood that Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force, were already studying the possibility of operations of this nature. In any case, it was thought better to approach General Eisenhower direct on this question and not to attempt to alter his Directive as now finally approved.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Requested General Ismay to discuss this question with General Eisenhower at a suitable opportunity.

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

The circulation of this paper has been strictly limited. Item 1
It is issued for the personal use of Brigadier Hollis

TO BE KEPT UNDER LOCK AND KEY

It is requested that special care may be taken to ensure the secrecy of this document

MOST SECRET.

Copy No. 12

J.P.(42) 867.

Circulated for the consideration of the Chiefs of Staff

9th October, 1942.

WAR CABINET

JOINT PLANNING STAFF

OPERATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN - PLANNING

Note by Joint Planning Staff.

We attach, for the approval of the Chiefs of Staff, a draft telegram which we suggest should be despatched to the Joint Staff Mission.

(Signed) G.M. STEWART
R.E. VINTRAS
S.E. NORFOLK

Cabinet War Room.

ANNEX

DRAFT TELEGRAM

To: Joint Staff Mission.

From: Chiefs of Staff

BIGOT.

1. We consider that if "Torch" successful we should -

(i) ensure neutralisation of Rommel;

(ii) attempt to open Mediterranean;

(iii) undertake combined operations against Axis southern flank.

2. Capture of Sardinia or Sicily would directly or indirectly be material contribution to all these objects. Success in "Torch" and "Lightfoot" might well give fleeting opportunity for such an operation at comparatively little cost. Choice would probably depend on which quickest and easiest to capture, but Sardinia indicated at present.

If opportunity not taken, a second chance would probably not arise for long time.

3. Operations against Sardinia or Sicily would have to devolve largely on Americans.

4. General Eisenhower's Directive includes under Ultimate Objective the words quote intensification of air and sea operations against Axis installations in the Mediterranean area in order to ensure communications through the Mediterranean and to facilitate operations against the Axis on the European Continent unquote.

It is open to question whether the above authorises Eisenhower to undertake combined operations against Sicily or Sardinia should the opportunity arise.

5. We are determined not to take General Eisenhower's eye off the ball at this stage in the slightest degree but feel that the Combined Chiefs of Staff should direct him to initiate planning of operations for capture of Sardinia and Sicily before he leaves the country. If this is agreed the relevant sentence of his Directive would be better worded quote intensification of operations against Axis in the Mediterranean area in order to ensure communications through the Mediterranean and facilitate operations against the Axis on the European Continent unquote.

6. Please discuss this proposal with U.S. Chiefs of Staff. They may think actual amendment of directive which has approval of President and Prime Minister unnecessary. If so, we are prepared to agree provided Eisenhower is instructed to proceed with plans.

In discussion you should emphasise that we are anxious not to divert weight of American-British drive eastwards along coast of North Africa should this be necessary, but feel that planning for Sicily and Sardinia is essential precaution in case events fall out very favourably for us. Meanwhile we have in hand outline examination of capture of Sardinia and Sicily which, if the Combined Chiefs of Staff agree this proposal, we would hand over to General Eisenhower's staff.

For full Min. see A/Strat./2. 16

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S.(42) 139th Meeting (O)

Held on 6th October 1942

3. FUTURE STRATEGY - THE WAR AGAINST GERMANY IN 1943

(J.P.(42) 849) - A/Strategy/2

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(42) 137th Mtg. (O) Minute 3) - A/Strategy/2.

x x x x x x x x x

(ii) Sardinia and Sicily.

CAPTAIN BUZZARD said that there were certain arguments in favour of capturing Sardinia and Sicily in the early stages of the exploitation of "TORCH". The occupation of these Islands would probably be the most economical way of opening up the Mediterranean. Moreover the occupation of Sicily would cut the supply line across the central Mediterranean and would thus contribute to the speedy elimination of Axis forces in North Africa.

SIR ALAN BROOKE agreed that there was considerable force in this argument but said that he would prefer to see the enterprises undertaken by the Americans while we concentrated on the battle in Tripolitania.

LORD LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN suggested that, if French reactions proved very favourable to "TORCH", one of the best ways of exploiting our early success would be the rallying of Corsica. With the aerodromes there in our hands operations against Sardinia should prove easier.

Considerable doubt was expressed on whether much use could be made of the aerodromes in Corsica until the Axis forces in Sardinia had been neutralised.

x x x x x x x x x

THE COMMITTEE instructed the Joint Planning Staff:- X

(i) To prepare, as a matter of urgency, a report on future strategy on the lines suggested by Brigadier Stewart at 'X' above.

(ii) To examine and report on the forces required in the United Kingdom to make invasion an impracticable operation for Germany to undertake in 1943.

X See A/STRATEGY/2.

Annex II

MOST SECRET.

PRIME MINISTER.

"TORCH".

D 165/2.

The Chiefs of Staff considered your Minute -6 at Flag 'A' at their Meeting this morning. They feel that the first and principal objective of "TORCH" must be to eliminate Rommel and open up the Mediterranean in conjunction with "LIGHTFOOT".

2. At the same time they entirely agree that plans must be prepared for the exploitation of "TORCH" northwards, and the following studies have already been put in hand -

(a) Plans for the capture of Sardinia (Operation "BRIMSTONE") and Sicily (Operation "HUSKY");

(b) Plans to capture Pantelleria (the Chief of Combined Operations is charged with this study);

(c) The possibility of other offensive operations in the Mediterranean.

As soon as the above studies have been completed, the Chiefs of Staff intend to prepare a comprehensive appreciation of possible operations in the Mediterranean, and to submit their recommendations for our future strategy in that theatre.

3. The Bombardment of Southern Italy.
The United States contingent for "TORCH"

(2) Annex I

includes 300 bombers whose primary role will be the neutralisation of the aerodromes in Southern Spain, should the Axis acquire the use of them. It is hoped that a large part of this force will be available for any operations against Rommel which take place from Tunis and then for the air bombardment of Italy.

4. The Malta Force.

The Joint Staff is in touch with General Eisenhower's Staff on this matter, and the Chiefs of Staff await their proposals as to the plans and preparations which Lord Gort should be asked to set on foot. When their recommendations have been received, the Chiefs of Staff will communicate at once with Lord Gort.

5. The Advance into Tunisia.

The "Mission" given by General Eisenhower to General Anderson and his First Army is as follows:-

(i) To secure the port of ALGIERS and adjacent air fields;

(ii) To establish and maintain communications between ALGIERS and ORLEANSVILLE;

(iii) To build up rapidly a striking force through ALGIERS and adjacent ports;

(iv) To secure TUNISIA at the earliest possible date.

(Signed) H. L. ISMAY.

1st October, 1942.

Mr Jones

8

Passed
with Pleasure
for orig.

MOST SECRET.

C.I.G.S.
FIRST SEA LORD.
C.A.S.

The accompanying minute to the Prime Minister has been drafted in accordance with the discussion which took place at the Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff this morning (C.O.S.(42)132nd Meeting (O), Minute 4).

6

2. Would you let me have your concurrence or amendments as soon as possible?

1 Final of
29

(Signed) H. L. ISMAY.

30th September, 1942.

4

MOST SECRET

PRIME MINISTER

"TORCH"

The Chiefs of Staff considered your Minute at Flag "A" at their Meeting this morning. They feel that the first and principal objective of "TORCH" must be to eliminate Rommel and open up the Mediterranean in conjunction with "LIGHTFOOT".

2. At the same time they entirely agree that plans must be prepared for the exploitation of "TORCH" northwards, and the following studies have already been put in hand -

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As soon as the above studies have been completed, the Chiefs of Staff intend to prepare a comprehensive appreciation of possible operations in the Mediterranean, and to submit their recommendations for our future strategy in that theatre.

3. The Bombardment of Southern Italy.

The United States contingent for "TORCH" includes 300 bombers whose primary role will be the neutralisation of the aerodromes in Southern Spain, should the Axis acquire the use of them. It is hoped that a large part of this force will be available for any operations against Rommel which take place from Tunis and then for the air bombardment of Italy.

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(iii) To build up rapidly a striking force through ALGIERS and adjacent ports;

(iv) To secure TUNISIA at the earliest possible date.

30th September, 1942.

6

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S. (42) 132nd Meeting (O)

Held on 30th September 1942

4. OPERATION TORCH: POSSIBILITIES OF EXPLOITATION

THE COMMITTEE considered the following minute from the Prime Minister on the possibilities of exploiting TORCH, if successful:-

P.T.O

Annex I

"GENERAL ISMAY FOR C.O.S. COMMITTEE (D.165/2)

Let me see what studies have been made so far for the exploitation of TORCH, should it prove entirely successful. Sardinia, Sicily and Italy itself have no doubt been considered. If things go well, we should not waste a day but carry the war northwards with audacity. I am hoping that Air plans have already been made to bring Southern Italy under close bombing attack as soon as we are established in Tunis. What arrangements have been made with Lord Gort about the Malta force? Assuming that Tunis comes over quietly and swiftly, what forces do we send forward to clear up Tripoli?

(Intld.) W.S.C.

28.9.42"

THE COMMITTEE were informed that the following papers on this subject were in course of preparation by the Joint Planning Staff.

(i) An Appreciation for the capture of Sardinia and Sicily.

(ii) An Appreciation balancing the various offensive operations which would be open to us in the Mediterranean theatre.

(iii) A report entitled "The War Against Germany - 1943", dealing with certain aspects of Mediterranean strategy.

(iv) A comprehensive Appreciation taking into account the operational possibilities disclosed by the above examination.

In addition, Combined Operations Headquarters had been asked to examine the assault phases of an operation for the capture of Pantellaria, as part of an outline plan for the occupation of the island.

SIR ALAN BROOKE suggested that there was a tendency to look too far ahead. The next consideration, after consolidating the TORCH area, should be the annihilation of enemy forces in Tripoli, by co-operation between TORCH forces and the Eighth Army.

With regard to the Prime Minister's query about Air plans for bombing Southern Italy, SIR CHARLES PORTAL said that the Americans were hoping to establish a force of some 300 bombers in North Africa, primarily as a precaution against Axis interference from aerodromes in Southern Spain. It was hoped that at least a part of this force would be available to help in operations against Rommel, and then for bombing attacks on Italy.

"THE COMMITTEE:-

(a) Agreed to give further consideration to the Prime Minister's minute when the above reports were ready.

(b) Instructed the Secretary to prepare an interim reply to the Prime Minister's minute in the light of the above and to submit it to him."

5

S E C R E T. COPY. 42/1093.

Colonel Price.

At their Meeting this morning, Directors of Plans considered the Prime Minister's Personal Minute to the Chiefs of Staff Committee No. D.165/2 of the 28th September. - 6

A number of papers are in course of preparation dealing with our strategy in the Mediterranean theatre on the assumption of a successful "TORCH", but it may be some weeks before these papers are completed. For this reason, Directors of Plans instructed me to send you the following information as to the present position of planning regarding this area, in the hope that this might enable the Chiefs of Staff to return an interim reply to the Prime Minister's Minute, pending the completion of the formal reports.

(i) The Future Operational Planning Section are engaged on Appreciations for the capture of Sardinia (Operation "BRIMSTONE") and Sicily (Operation "HUSKY"). - F/ITALY/4 - F/ITALY/5+6

(ii) In addition, the Future Operational Planning Section is preparing an Appreciation balancing the various Offensive Operations which will be open to us in the Mediterranean theatre.

(iii) Certain aspects of Mediterranean strategy are dealt with in a report entitled "The War against Germany - 1943" which it is hoped will be in the hands of the Chiefs of Staff by the end of this week.

(iv) The Chief of Combined Operations has been asked to examine the assault phases of an operation for the capture of Pantelleria on the assumption that "TORCH" has been successful, and that the Allies are established in Tunisia, in order that the Future Planning Section may prepare an outline plan.

When all these papers have been completed, it is intended to prepare a comprehensive appreciation, taking into account the operational possibilities disclosed by the papers, as to what should be our strategy in the Mediterranean theatre in the event of Operation "TORCH" proving successful.

This appreciation, either with or without the other papers referred to above, should, it is thought, provide a full answer to the Prime Minister's Minute.

(Intld.) H.

29th September, 1942.

104
4
Sic

Unparaphrased Version of a Secret
Cypher Telegram not One Time Table

OZ 1361
TOO 1110Z/26
TOD 1220A/26

SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

IMPORTANT.

From :- Air Ministry,

To :- Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East.

OZ 1361 26. 9. 42.

C.O.S. (M.E.) 293

2

Your CC/99 of 23 September has been referred to the Joint Planning Staff for consideration.

2. Reference your paragraph 6, agree that it is at present unnecessary to carry out examination.

T.O.O. 1110Z/26

CIRCULATION.

Brig. Jacob
Foreign Secretary
First Sea Lord, Admiralty
C.6. Tels,,War Office.
C.A.S.
C.C.O.

SECRET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

Extract from C.O.S. (42) 240th Meeting

Held on 24th September 1942

2. FUTURE OPERATIONS.

E/NAF/8

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(42) 125th Meeting (O))

CC/99 of 23/9 - 2

THE COMMITTEE took note of a telegram from the Commander-in-Chief, Middle East on projects for certain future operations.

COS (42) 270th Mtg. minute 2.

ISL 12
misc rally
(0920 : 24/9)

Unparaphrased version of a Secret
Cypher Telegram not One Time Table

IZ. 1558.
TOO.0900Z/23
TOR.1540A/23

MOST SECRET CYPHER TELEGRAM

IMPORTANT

From: Mideast.

To: Air Ministry.

CC/99. 23.9.42.

Following for Chiefs of Staff from Commanders in Chief.

Reference Troopers 66784 MO 1 of 20 Sept.

1. We consider that before attempting capture of Crete and/or Dodecanese, the first necessity is to secure the whole of North Africa and re-open the Mediterranean route. Until Tripolitania has been secured any diversion of Mideast effort is unjustified.

2. We have recently concluded an examination of the best method of invading Europe from the Central and Eastern Mediterranean and have come to the firm conclusion that this should be through Sicily and/or Sardinia and Italy. The invasion of Crete and the Dodecanese would entail a large expedition which would detract from the resources necessary for the main effort via Sicily. We presume that the latter operation will be carried out mainly by forces other than from Mideast, with such assistance as Mideast might be in a suitable position to provide.

3. Once Cyrenaica is in our hands the value of Crete and the Dodecanese to the enemy and hence the justification for their capture both diminish sensibly. Moreover, after capture of Crete we should be faced with the problem of its retention in position unfavourable to us so long as the enemy retains Greece. There would be serious danger of Crete becoming a drain on our resources for which we would not obtain a commensurate dividend.

/4. In this

4. In this connection after the capture of Tripolitania - or even before it - should some substantial depreciation take place in the Russian situation in the Caucasus, we might yet have to provide considerable forces from Mideast for Persia-Iraq. We could not do this and find the necessary forces for the capture and retention of Crete and the Dodecanese.

5. Tactically we shall be faced as always with the provision of the short range fighter cover essential for the success of the operation. We see no reason to alter the opinion which we confirmed in J.P.S. paper No.62 dated 8th August 1941, that without the use of bases in Anatolia and/or unless the enemy reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean are reduced to a very low ebb the capture of Crete or the Dodecanese are impracticable undertakings. The possibility of using air bases in South-Western Anatolia is remote, and on recent experience the provision of short range fighter cover from aircraft carriers can only result in the loss of the carriers possibly even before their aircraft come into action.

6. In our view therefore under the conditions now in sight the diversion of resources for the capture of Crete and the Dodecanese is strategically unsound and we do not propose to carry out the examination asked for in Troopers 66784 MO 1 unless we are instructed to do so.

7. We do however appreciate the possibility of an Italian collapse and the necessity for exploiting this to the full should it spread to the outlying areas. So as to be ready for this we are reviewing the various factors involved in capturing Crete and the Dodecanese in such circumstances, but we feel that the conditions are too nebulous to make the preparation of detailed plans a worth while task.

T.O.O. 0900Z/23.

Circulation.

Brig. Jacob.
Foreign Secretary.
First Sea Lord.
C.6 Tels., War Office.
C.A.S.
C.C.O.

Copy.

MOST SECRET
CIPHER TELEGRAM.

From :- War Office.

Desp.1430 20 Sep 42.

To :- C.-in-C., MIDDLE EAST.

IMPORTANT.

No. 66784 cipher (M.O.1). 20 Sep 42.

MOST SECRET.

BIGOT.

1. Strategical planners here are considering the action to be taken in Mediterranean after success of Torch and defeat of Rommel. Presume you have considered capture of Crete and/or Dodecanese.

2. Forward by telegram outline of any such plans you may have considered stating forces shipping aircraft required and most suitable time of year for attack.

3. Please forward fastest secure method any detailed plans you may have for such operations.

T.O.O. 1300/20.

C.6. (Telegrams).

Distribution:

C.I.G.S.
V.C.I.G.S.
D.M.O.
D.D.M.O.(O).
D.P.(2).
D.M.I.
M.O.1. (16).

C.A.S.
C.N.S.
Brig. Jacob (6 copies).

X Previous to "Torch" (Capture of North Africa) Policy in Middle East is in file A|Pol|Dilkeas|1